

# LONDON READER

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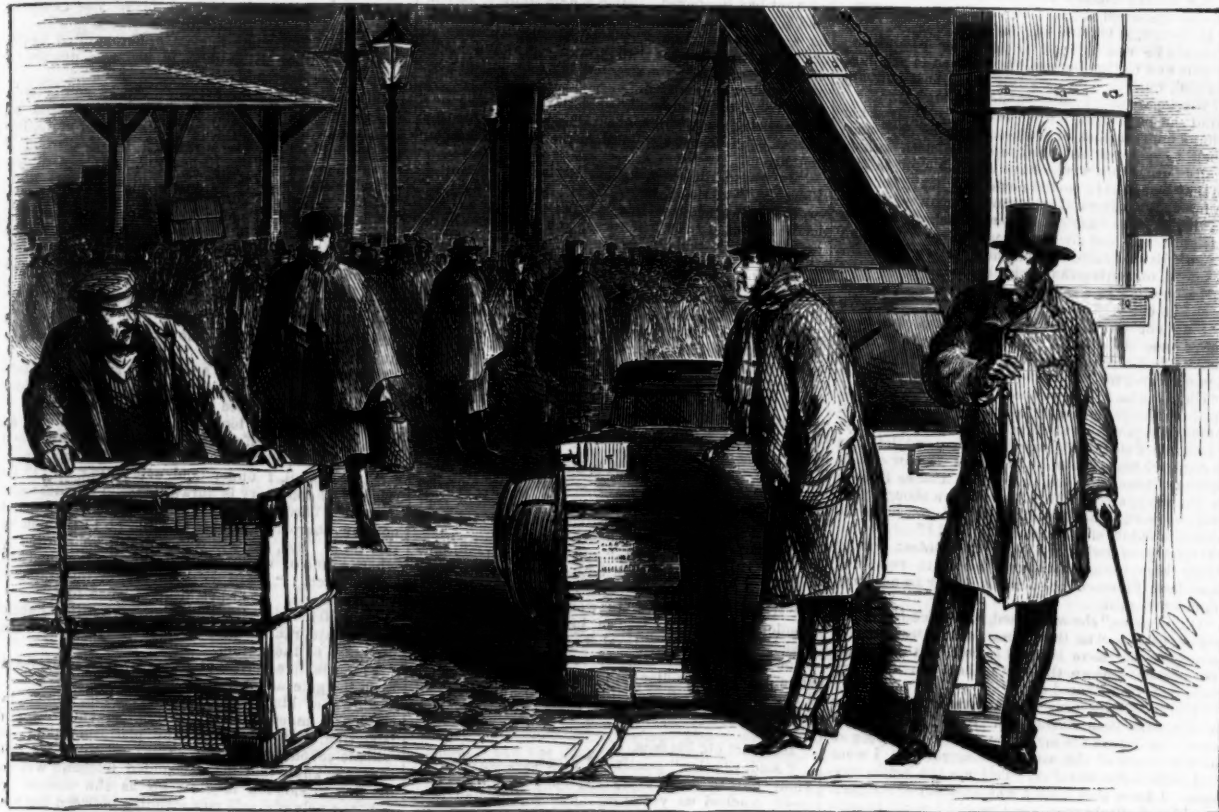
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[PRICE ONE PENNY.]



[WALKING TO HIS FATE.]

## FAULT ON BOTH SIDES.

### A Christmas Story.

#### CHAPTER VIII.

All was ended now, the hope and the fear and the sorrow,  
All the aching of heart, the restless, unsatisfied longing,  
All the dull, deep pain and constant anguish of patience. *Longfellow.*

In the clear, bright, fresh, frosty afternoon, within sight of the clustering white cottages of Riversham, and beneath the wide-spreading, leafless branches of a gnarled and twisted oak, husband and wife met after a separation of forty hours. Only their own hearts knew how each had suffered during that time. Both had endured the extreme of mental agony, both had considered the parting final and irrevocable, that in this life they would never meet again, and now they stood silently facing each other only a few yards apart, but as much divided as if the whole globe were between them.

Charles Harcourt's face was fierce and stern. He had no longer the shadow of a doubt concerning his wife's guilt, and he was not a man to show mercy to any one convicted of crime. Cruel, hard, and severe, he had steeled himself completely against those tenderer emotions which might, had he met Florence earlier in the day, have induced him to take her once more into his arms and implore her to unravel the mystery which still enshrouded her conduct.

He fixed his stern, pitiless eyes upon her, and stood silent and motionless.

She did not cower before him as it might be imagined a guilty woman would have done, but she shrank from him with an expression of horror on her face, that face which the last few hours had deprived of colour and left as pale as marble.

She was the first to break the silence.  
"What are you doing here?" she asked, in a low, thrilling voice. "Why have you come?"

"Rather let me ask you the question," he retorted, angrily. "What is your business here?"

"I deny your right to interrogate me."  
"Indeed! Remember, madam, you are still my wife—in name."

"No, no!" she answered, vehemently. "You have cast me from you—spurned me! I owe you no allegiance."

"So it appears. But, remember, you still bear my name, and, if you are deaf to all conscience, to all propriety, at least it behoves you to refrain from dragging my name through the mire of public scandal. I have a position to lose, a character to maintain, and—"

While he had been speaking she had been regarding him with a look of mingled horror and amazement, and here she interrupted him.

"You!" she said, "you dare speak to me in that fashion! You dare talk to me of position and character after what you have done!"  
She shuddered and turned aside.

He hastily replied:  
"It ill becomes you to speak in this manner. Coming whence I come, hearing what I have heard, knowing what chance has revealed to me, I am indeed astonished to listen to such words from your lips!"

"Where have you been to? Where do you come from? What have you heard? Stay, you need not answer me. You come from the little inn whither I am bound!"

"What! You confess it?"  
"Whither I am bound on an errand of mercy," she continued, not heeding the interruption. "You come from gazing on your own evil work; and even the sight of poor Gerald brought to death's door by your unfounded jealousy and evil passions—"

"Enough, enough!" he cried, hoarse with rage. "At least have the decency to refrain from mentioning his name to me."

"Well may you hate to hear it! But that name shall ring in your ears to all eternity, and—oh, Charles!"—and her voice became suddenly tender.

and she came a pace or two nearer to her husband—  
"Oh, Charles, on your knees return thanks to Heaven that his life has been spared!"

This speech redoubled Harcourt's fury.

"Thank Heaven his life has been spared!" he echoed. "If wishes could kill, never would he rise from his bed again; if thoughts could slay, he would have died ere this, and you, too—you who dare to defend your lover in the presence of your husband! It is monstrous!"

He caught Florence by her two wrists and gazed savagely into her face. His hard grasp hurt her delicate flesh and wrung from her a little cry of pain, but she returned his look fearlessly.

"Would you kill me?" she asked, with a sad sigh. "Oh, Charles, would I had died before I had known what I know now!"

"Would you had died before you became what you are now!" he answered, savagely.

"I am nothing of which you need be ashamed," she replied, proudly. "The only shame I bear is that of being your wife, but—oh, Charles, I have loved you so dearly and so truly—I have ever done a wife's duty; my conscience accuses me of no treason towards you—ay, and I love you now, in spite of all your unjust suspicions and all your harsh and cruel usage. Even now I will share your flight, and—oh, Charles! why did you come here at all? Think of the danger you run! You may have been recognised. Fly, dear, fly!" and she laid her hand upon his arm in earnest entreaty. "Escape while there is yet time! In another hour it may be too late!"

He gazed at her in great bewilderment.  
"Are you mad?" he asked. "Of what are you talking? What do you mean?"

"I know everything," she said. "Oh, Charles, had all gone well with you, had you been in no danger, never—no, never would I have humiliated myself before you; but now—now that you are menaced, now that you will have to fly the country, see me a suppliant! I swear to you that I am innocent—nay, more, I promise you such an explanation that must satisfy even you, and I beg—I pray, by all the love



you once bore me, by all the vows sworn at the altar to let me continue your companion. Think, Charles, how every minute brings you into greater danger! Come, come at once! Let us go together. America, Australia, I care not where, so that I am with you! Oh, Charles, perhaps I shall be a better poor man's wife than I have been a rich one's! Let me go with you! Oh, let me go with you!"

This sudden change in the tone and manner of Florence Harcourt amazed her husband not a little. He thought that trouble had turned her brain. For a moment he was inclined to push her roughly on one side and bid her begone, but a glance at the pale, beautiful, upturned face, so full of earnest entreaty and passionate supplication, unnerved him.

Had she only been strong enough to conceal her feelings under a mask of coolness, had she only continued to answer his hard speeches with others equally hard, there would have been no explanation, and they would have parted never to meet again; but the impulsive nature of a loving woman would assert itself. She had given herself a part to play which she was not strong enough to carry out, and as a suppliant she stood before him, only anxious for his safety, forgetting the wrong he had done her, the cruel wound he had inflicted, and even the crime of which she believed him guilty.

"I do not understand you," he said, but in a gentler tone than he had hitherto spoken. "Why should I fly? What danger menaces me? Of what do you suspect me?"

"Oh, Charles!" she sobbed, "it is no suspicion, it is a certainty. I know that your unfounded jealousy led you. I know that it was you who waylaid Gerald Talbot on Christmas Eve, and left him for dead within a few miles of where we now stand! Knowing that, do you wonder I thank Heaven his life was spared? Oh, Charles, even though your cruel suspicions had been just, would you have the blood of a fellow creature on your head?"

Perfectly overwhelmed with amazement at the charge brought against him, Harcourt remained speechless. Florence took his silence for an acknowledgment of guilt.

"Oh, Charles," she exclaimed, in a voice full of the deepest pathos, "to think that your unwarrantable jealousy should have led you to commit this crime! Had you but known the truth, how much misery would have been spared us!"

"Florence," he answered, solemnly, calling her for the first time during the interview by that name, "as Heaven is my witness, I had not even so much as heard of the attempted murder till I went to the office this morning. Tell me the truth, Florence. I know that Talbot was innocent of the theft for which I discharged him; would I could be convinced the other charge was equally without foundation! Tell me the truth, Florence; if there is any explanation to this terrible affair, for mercy's sake let me hear it."

"When you have heard it you will let me go with you?"

"Back to Cardross?"

"No, no; you will not be safe there. We must go abroad. All I ask is that I may share your flight."

"Pshaw!" answered the husband, impatiently. "I tell you I know nothing about it. It was an absurd fancy for you to take into your head—absurd. Some tramp or footpad attacked him on his way here. How is it I find you in Riversham with him? Answer me that. How is it I hear of you at the inn overpowered by emotion, and tending him with affectionate solicitude? Answer me these questions, and all may yet be well."

Florence looked her husband full in the face with her clear, truthful blue eyes as she made answer:

"Gerald Talbot is my sister's husband."

Harcourt staggered back a few paces, and passed his hand two or three times over his brow.

"Your sister's husband—Helen's husband?" he repeated, slowly.

"Yes."

"Why did you not tell me this before?"

"I had promised not to do so."

"Why was it a secret?"

"On account of Gerald's relations. I may have done wrong in making the promise; I may have done wrong in keeping it. Listen to the story, and judge for yourself."

"Go on."

"Gerald Talbot is the son and heir of Mackenzie Talbot, of Ketteringham."

"What, the wealthy banker?"

"Yes."

"I never knew that."

"No. Helen and I alone possessed the secret. He loved Helen with all the fervour of his ardent nature, and she returned his affection; but Helen was penniless, and you know of Mackenzie Talbot's greed for gold!"

"Yes. Every one has heard of it."

"He wished Gerald to marry Miss Money Penny, the heiress, but Gerald was plighted to my sister. This he dared not tell his father, but, without assigning any reason, he resolutely refused to wed the lady his father had chosen for him."

"Well?"

"It came to an open rupture, and the old man disinherited his son and bade him earn his living as best he could. He came straight to me and told me all that had happened. From me he went to Helen, and asked her if she could love a poor man as well as a rich one. You may imagine her answer. I promised to intercede with you to get him a clerkship in your office; you granted my request, and he and Helen were married."

"I begin to understand," said Harcourt. He spoke almost like one talking in a dream, for his brain and heart were full of the injustice he had committed.

"It was a romantic, foolish business," continued Florence, "to those who look at marriage as they would at an account in a ledger; but if you could have witnessed their happiness, you would not have judged them harshly."

"Still, I do not understand the reason for concealment."

"That was Gerald's wish. He knew his father's character, and believed that to acknowledge his marriage with a dowless girl would so widen the breach between Mr. Talbot and himself that it would never close again. His notion was to make for himself an income and a position, then to take Helen to Ketteringham as his wife. He felt that he could then be independent, that he could not have it cast in his teeth that he was a pauper, and had come home to beg."

"Why was I not told this before?"

"Gerald made me promise secrecy. Oh, Charles, I know I did wrong, but how could I foresee your cruel suspicions? On Christmas Eve I would have spoken, but you would not hear."

"Still," said Harcourt, "you do not explain how it was that you and Talbot both chose Riversham for your flight?"

"Helen lives here. He would not take her to London with him for fear of his secret being discovered. What more natural than that Gerald should come to his home; what more natural than that I should seek the shelter of the only roof beneath which I had a right to seek protection—the roof of that sister for whose sake I had been turned from my own home?"

Harcourt hid his face.

"And, Charles," continued Florence, eagerly, anxious now to make every explanation, "when the news reached us yesterday that Gerald had been murdered, and lay at the little inn on the common, Helen was far too overcome to go to him. I went in her stead. Do you blame me for that? No, I am sure you do not. Oh, husband, dear husband, if you knew how I have suffered! You do believe me—you will believe me! See, there is Helen's cottage. You can catch a glimpse of it through the trees—down there in that sheltered garden. Oh, Charles, but for—for—what has happened that cannot be undone—we might yet be happy!"

"Can you forgive me, Florence?" Harcourt asked, in a thick and broken voice.

"I love you!" was her single answer.

Oh, what magic there is in those three words! How many a heart has beat with rapture at hearing them faintly murmured by rosy lips; but, perhaps to no ears did they ever sound so pleasant as to those of Charles Harcourt when spoken by his wife on that occasion!

"A woman's love! If men only knew its value, they would not waste it as they do but too often, for a woman's love is the strongest power in the whole world—strong for good or for evil as the case may be. Once firmly planted, it remains faithful for ever, capable of attempting and achieving such great things as neither mind nor muscle can accomplish."

"Then you will forgive me, Florence? you will pardon all I have said and done? you will come with me?"

"Yes, yes, I will come with you. There is no time to lose; the train will be here in ten minutes, and it is half a mile to the station."

"And you will love me as before?"

"Yes."

"Dearest! Yet if you forgive me, I doubt I can ever forgive myself."

He held out his hand to her, and gladly she came towards him with something of the old smile upon her face; but as she was about to place her white fingers in his she started back with an exclamation of horror.

"There is blood upon your hand!" she cried.

It was only a trifling speck of discoloration which in her excited fancy took the hue of blood, but her alarm was terrible to witness.

"It is nothing," Harcourt answered. "Yes, yes, it is his! Oh, Charles, how could you! Oh, why did you suspect me?"

"Why do you suspect me, Florence? I swear to you I have never so much as seen Gerald Talbot since he left St. Stylices' Yard two days ago."

She looked at him sadly, sorrowfully, and wistfully.

"Do not deny it," she answered, softly and sadly. "You may trust me, Charles. I love you—even if Gerald had died I should have loved you—even if they had taken you to prison, and—if—if—"

The thoughts conjured up in her excited brain overpowered her utterance, and she was unable to complete her sentence.

"But, Florence, dear Florence, cannot you believe me? I confess to having felt a murderous hatred of Talbot on Christmas Eve; but for anything more, for any attempt to retaliate upon him for the wrong I thought he had inflicted upon me, for this attack which nearly cost him his life, I repeat I am as innocent as yourself. The news came to me in a letter this morning. Tell me, why do you suspect me?"

She put her hand into the pocket of her dress and drew forth a large white-handled knife, on which was engraved her husband's name. This she placed in his hands without a word.

"Well," said he, "where did you get this?"

"I picked it up myself yesterday, within twenty yards of the spot where the attempt was made to murder Gerald Talbot."

She shuddered as she answered, a sudden faintness came over her, and she would have fallen had not Harcourt supported her with his strong arm.

For a moment he looked puzzled and confused as he regarded the knife he held in his hand, and then a light came upon him and his face brightened up.

"I see it all, I understand everything now!" he cried. "The mystery is unravelled—do you hear me, Florence, darling? I can explain everything, but not now, there is not time. I must go to London by this train. See, there it comes," and he pointed to where a line of white steam in the distance marked its approach. "I will write to you, or telegraph, if I cannot come. Good-bye, dearest, good-bye."

He kissed his wife's lips, and, vaulting lightly over a gate, ran across the intervening fields in the direction of the station.

Florence, in a perfect state of bewilderment, leant upon the gate and followed him with her eyes.

She saw him rushing to the station, which he reached a moment after the engine, snorting and labouring, had stopped at the platform; then the whistle sounded, the train glided off upon its iron road, she knew that her reconciled husband was on his way to London to clear up, as she understood him, the only obstacle now standing between her and happiness.

It was with far different feelings on that 26th of December that Florence entered the Riversham cottage to those which had agitated her on Christmas Day. Nobody more miserable than, now, far happier.

The heavy storm-cloud which had broken over her, bidding fair to desolate her young life for ever, had cleared off as suddenly as it had formed, and, if it were not brilliant sunshine yet, there were gleams sufficiently bright and promising to justify her in anticipating a cloudless sky ere long.

Still there was much remaining that required explanation, but her confidence in her husband was almost, if not entirely, restored, and with what patience she could muster, she resolved to wait for the solution of the suspicious circumstance which had confirmed her worst dreads, the finding of the knife with Charles Harcourt's name engraved upon the handle close by the spot where the murder was attempted.

This fact, coupled with her knowledge of her husband's jealousy, was, of course, sufficient to justify her in believing that in his rage Harcourt had tracked Gerald to the heath, and had taken vengeance upon him for the concealment of an imaginary wrong; but now that she had repeated assurance from his own lips of his entire innocence, now that he had left her to go to London and bring the real culprit to justice—for so she interpreted his last hasty words—she felt supremely happy, and few would have recognised in her the Florence Harcourt of the preceding day.

Leaving her happy and contented, we will follow her husband to London, and keep him company while he is engaged in unravelling the mystery of the attempted murder.

## CHAPTER IX.

Thus hath the course of justice whirled about.

Richard III.

THE train from Riversham Charles Harcourt was fortunate enough to catch was an express, but fast as it went it could not go rapidly enough for him, and he



fretted with impatience at the time that was necessarily occupied in travelling back to the great city.

He was convinced now completely and entirely of his wife's innocence, and the fact of his having suspected her seemed to draw her more closely towards him.

Charles Harcourt, cool, hard, and calculating as he has been described, did not own those attributes by reason of absence of heart, but rather by dint of severe schooling.

He was a man of considerable feeling, but he never cared to show it. Now, in the concluding scene of the great domestic drama in which he was playing the leading character, he threw aside the mask which he wore in St. Stylites' Yard. He cast aside his business habit and became, or rather showed himself in his true light—a young man, the happy husband of a beautiful wife, with other thoughts and higher aspirations than money-grubbing in a city office.

Still there were certain business habits natural to him that he could not shake off, even on such an occasion as that of his journey from Riversham to London on Boxing Day. For example, he acknowledged he had deeply wronged Gerald Talbot, and Florence still more deeply. This he entered, as it were, on one side of a mental ledger, then cast about for means by which he could write off the debt he had incurred to them.

He believed he was in possession of a clue to the mystery of the murderous assault to which Talbot had nearly fallen a victim. Clearly it was his duty to bend all his energies to following up that clue, and it was with that notion prominently in his mind that he jumped into a hansom at the London Bridge station and bade the cabman drive swiftly to St. Stylites' Yard.

It was late when he reached his office, within a few minutes of the usual hour for closing, but he was in time to make his inquiries.

The old cashier, Walmsley, came into his private room with a face of the gravest importance the moment he arrived.

"Oh, Master Charles," said he, "I am so glad you have come back. Dunderum and Dunderhead's cheque has been dishonoured, and Henry Malcolm, of the firm of Scott and Plaid, has been here three times to see you about that payment, and Lobblily Brothers have smashed, and—"

"Confound them all! What do a few hundreds matter? Where's Duncombe?"

The city man asked this latter question with an amount of irritable excitement that Walmsley, in all his experience, had never known him exhibit before, while his total disregard for the business details of the day was so unusual and so inexplicable that the old cashier fairly gasped for breath.

"Where's Duncombe? Send him to me instantly," repeated Harcourt.

"Mr. Duncombe left early this afternoon, Master Charles; he said he had a bad headache. You see, sir, it's the day after Christmas, and several of the young gentlemen have had headaches, too. Those puddings are so unwholesome."

"Duncombe gone?" exclaimed Harcourt, commencing with himself. "Surely he could not have suspected anything! No, no, that is impossible; and yet—"

His eye fell upon the cheque-book lying before him on the table, the cheque-book in which he had commenced to draw out a draft in Duncombe's favour, but which in his excitement he had, he now remembered, left incomplete.

Instantly he opened the book, but he looked in vain for the half-filled-in cheque. It had been torn away. There was the counterpart written on by himself, but the cheque itself was missing.

This furnished him in a moment with a clue to Duncombe's headache, and, at the same time, it confirmed certain other suspicions.

Cramping the cheque-book into his pocket, he darted out again into the street, without a word to the astonished Walmsley, and, leaping again into the cab that waited for him, he bade the driver proceed with the utmost speed to his bankers'.

It was past banking hours, but Harcourt rang the bell, trusting to finding some one still on the premises—nor was he disappointed. One of the junior partners was still in his room, and to him Harcourt, being a well-known man, with a large balance, had ready access.

"Mr. Bullion," he said, "can you possibly oblige me by letting me know what cheques signed by me have been presented to-day?"

"I can tell you of one myself," the banker answered, smiling, "for as it was for rather a large amount to pay over the counter Mr. Grey referred to me before cashing it."

"For how much was it?"

"Fifteen hundred pounds; but I know it was all

right. It was brought by your own confidential clerk. What's his name—the patty-faced man?"

"Duncombe."

"Ah, yes—that's the man."

"Could you let me see the cheque?" asked Harcourt, keeping perfectly cool, and showing neither by voice nor manner that he expected anything wrong.

"Yes, I think so—in fact, I believe Grey, the cashier, has not yet left."

In a few minutes, during which the banker and the merchant chatted together on politics and the weather, the cheque was produced.

Harcourt examined it minutely, then referred to the book he had brought with him, and inspected the counterpart with minute intensity.

"Is there anything wrong?"

"Yes," Harcourt replied. "This cheque is a forgery!"

Mr. Bullion started.

"Impossible, my dear sir! I examined it myself, and I could swear to your writing."

"Part of the writing is mine; the signature and the amount are forged—cleverly, I grant, but none the less forgeries."

"We should never have paid it to any chance customer, but your managing clerk, a man we know so well, brought it himself and—"

"No apologies, Mr. Bullion. We shall have the greater part of the money back in four-and-twenty hours."

"Have you got the man?"

"No."

"Do you know where he has gone?"

"No; but I want him so badly that if it cost me twice the amount of that cheque I will have him—yes, if I travel round the globe to find him."

From the bank Harcourt drove to a police-station, where a certain famous detective, noted throughout the city for his skill in tracking defaulting and fraudulent clerks, was to be found.

Harcourt was lucky enough to catch him just as he was on the point of going home to a quiet tea with his wife and family—for the detective was essentially a domestic man, and nobody, to look at his rosy cheeks and happy, contented face, would have dreamed that he was the repository of more criminal secrets than probably any other man in the whole of London.

In a few words the monarch of St. Stylites' Yard stated what he wanted, and, money being no object, in ten minutes from the time he entered the office, men were despatched in various directions all over London, and the telegraph had flashed messages to all the English seaports with a description of Duncombe, and instructions that wherever he might be found he was to be watched.

The next step was to obtain a warrant for his arrest, and then no more could be done until information of his whereabouts was received.

"It's ten to one he's gone to Liverpool," said the detective; "they always do. Lor! Mr. Harcourt, those rogues are always fools. They might get to places in Great Britain where nobody would ever think of looking for 'em, but 'stead o' that they go right away to the very first place that if they only thought a bit they'd know we should search."

In this special instance, at all events, the detective was right. An answer came back in an incredibly short time from Liverpool that a person answering to the description of Duncombe had arrived by the afternoon train, and had taken a berth on board the "Grand Duke," screw steamer for New York; further, the telegram added, the "Grand Duke" would sail early the next morning.

"What shall we do? How shall we catch him? Mind, we must make sure of him."

"Lor, sir, the case is that simple it's a regular waste of genius," answered the detective, contemptuously; "there ain't no sport in such as he. Why, Mr. Harcourt, if you went out fox-hunting, and the fox just went a few yards off into a ditch, and lay there for the hounds to catch hold of him, you wouldn't call that sport, would you?"

"You don't think he can escape us?"

"Why, sir, we've got him at this moment as tight as if he was in Newgate. I'll just send a man down by the 9.15, and we'll have him here, handcuffed, by breakfast-time."

Harcourt had as yet not even hinted that he had a charge beyond forgery to bring against his late clerk.

At present he could only surmise that it was Duncombe who had attempted to murder Gerald Talbot. He had no legal evidence against him, and he himself was completely at a loss to imagine any motive strong enough to induce a man like Duncombe to plan such a crime. He never would have suspected him but for the knife—that white-handled knife which had assailed Florence such strong presumptive proof of his own guilt; but the sight of it had re-

called to his mind an incident surprisingly trivial in itself, which had led Duncombe to borrow the knife on the morning of the 24th of December.

This was the clue which he had come to London to follow up. The incident of the forged cheque—though totally unconnected with the other business, so far as he could see—to a certain extent confirmed his suspicions; and he would have had no doubt whatever on the matter had he only been able to assign any probable motive for the commission of the crime.

It was in vain he racked his brain to supply this important link of evidence—still he clung to the belief that, by means of the knife, he would not only exonerate himself, but bring the true culprit to justice.

In his eagerness—dreading that in unskillful hands Duncombe might after all effect his escape—Charles Harcourt offered the famous detective a liberal fee to take the matter into his own hands. The business was arranged at once, and at a quarter past nine the city merchant and the police-officer left London in a first-class carriage of the London and North Western Railway Company bound for Liverpool.

It was an unadventurous journey. The detective, well used to such sudden trips, and as comfortable in a train as in his bed, curled himself up on the cushions, and slept like a top. But Harcourt had no inclination to sleep. His brain was too busy to allow him to court repose. The events of the day had been of far too exciting a character and were yet so far from being complete that to him sleep was an impossibility.

Again and again he went mentally over the old ground, but without being able to bring any new light to bear upon the matter, which on reaching Lime Street appeared to him just as strange, confused, and inexplicable a jumble as it had done on leaving Euston Square.

It was a cold, damp, miserable morning. A white fog, which seemed to penetrate the chest and produce every variety of cough, hung over Liverpool, enveloping it in a choking, misty vapour. The deserted streets were wet and shiny, the roads were muddy and slippery, the few people lounging about the station were shivering and depressed.

"What's to be done first?" Harcourt asked, as well as his chattering teeth would permit.

"Brandy and water, hot," answered the detective, concisely.

Harcourt demurred at the waste of time. It seemed to him that every moment gave an additional chance to Duncombe for escape, and he said as much.

"Don't you worry yourself," answered the detective, cheerily; "you've put it in my hands and you'll have to leave it there."

"But suppose he should give us the slip?"

"He can't, my dear sir—it's impossible!"

The intelligent officer dropped another lump of sugar into his grog and asked for a mild cigar.

"How long are you going to stay here?"

"About an hour."

"An hour?" echoed Harcourt, aghast.

"Yes. It's more comfortable than down by the water. Don't you go supposing I'm idle all this time. I have my messengers every few minutes."

"I have not seen them."

"That's because you don't know where to look. Did you notice that porter at the station who shoved up against me and begged my pardon?"

"Yes."

"That was a message. So was that beggar boy who asked me to buy a box o' lights. Bless you, Mr. Harcourt, we've got our ways of doing business. I only wish this was a difficult case, that there might be some honour and glory in. Lor! bless you, sir, nabbing this chap Duncombe is like shooting an old hen, sitting on her perch, at a distance of a couple o' yards; it's certain work, but it ain't a thing to be proud of."

After an hour or more, during which various hot brandies and sundry mild cigars were consumed, the detective proposed going down to the river much as if he were inviting Harcourt to a pleasant stroll.

Through the dark, wet, foggy, muddy streets they splashed their way riverwards, Harcourt outstripping his companion in his eagerness, until they reached the long line of quays fringing the Mersey.

On past the long row of lights which gloomed and glimmered diamally they went upon their way, until they reached a wharf which showed some signs of life and animation. Porters with lanterns were bustling to and fro, luggage piled in huge heaps stood waiting transport, and a dismal knot of gloomy passengers huddled together waited the boat that was to take them off to the big steamer which lay snorting and blowing off her steam in the middle of the river.

"That's the 'Grand Duke,' Mr. Harcourt," said the detective, indicating the large vessel looming hazily in the mist.

"Good Heavens! Why, she is on the point of starting!"

"Yes, she'll be off in half an hour—or less."

"Where is a boat? How can we get on board? I know how it would be if we frittered away our time—we shall miss him!"

"Not likely."

"But where is he? Where's Duncombe?"

"He'll be here in five minutes."

"Are you sure he isn't on board?"

"Of course I am! Lor, sir, I weren't born yesterday."

Under ordinary circumstances Charles Harcourt would have been every whit as calm, cool, and collected as the detective, but in the present instance all his customary sang-froid had deserted him, and he was full of eager apprehension that after all Duncombe might escape.

Every moment fresh people arrived upon the wharf, and yet the police-officer stood calm and unmoved, puffing his cigar, and seemingly taking no manner of notice of the different arrivals who hurried and pushed about him.

"Have no fear, sir," he whispered; "I shall have notice when he comes. It ain't the first time by a dozen that I've caught my bird on this very wharf."

Harcourt waited with what patience he could. Presently a man, dressed like a dock labourer, passed close by them, and, turning for a moment, touched his hat.

The detective instantly threw away the end of his cigar.

"He's coming now," said he. "You just get out of sight behind that crane."

"Why?"

"Because, if he catches sight of you he'll know there's something wrong, and make a bolt for it—not but what we should be sure of having him if he did, but I like to do these little jobs in a quiet and gentlemanly way without any disturbance."

"Very well. He will not see me here."

"No. That's right enough. Mind you don't show till I've got the darbies on him. Here he comes! Just stop where you are till I give the signal."

(To be continued.)

## SCIENCE.

**SIGNS OF THE WEATHER.**—Mr. Robert Scott, at the Royal Institution, in a lecture on "Meteorology," said that when the clouds lie low on the hills it is a sign of rain, for the air near the ground must then be largely saturated with moisture. Very bright, clear weather, making very distant hills plainly visible, is also a sign of rain, for when the air is dry it contains more dust and haze. As the vapour condenses, it first attaches itself to the fine particles of dust, and, by rendering them heavier, causes them to sink to the ground. A fine starlight night in otherwise rainy weather is a sign that it will probably begin to rain again next morning.

**LUBRICATORS.**—An improved lubricator, which acts upon the principle of a siphon, has recently been patented by Mr. C. D. Austin, of Newcastle-on-Tyne. He proposes to fix in the tubular stem formed at the lower part of the oil cup or reservoir, or fixed in the socket thereof, a discharge tube, the upper end of which projects into the said reservoir, and is fitted with a tube closed at its upper end, which latter tube is of such a size that it shall fit loosely on the discharge tube so as to leave a small annular or other shaped passage between them, up which the oil passes into the discharge tube, through which it descends to the surface to be lubricated.

**KRUPP'S BALLOON GUNS.**—Some of the correspondents at the Prussian headquarters before Paris lately announced that a steel gun, with an inch and a-half bore, five feet long, mounted on a pillar in somewhat the same way as an equatorial telescope, had been sent by Herr Krupp to the besiegers of Paris. It was intended to fire at the numerous balloons used by the French. We now hear from Essen that the Prussian staff have ordered ten more guns of the same kind. This infernally proves that the Prussians are by no means so sanguine as reported with respect to the speedy reduction of Paris, and that they attach considerable importance to a means for checking balloon posts—possibly even fearing that a return balloon post may yet be organised by the ingenious French.

**BRONZE GUNS.**—The time cannot now be far off when the particular compound known as "gun metal" will be discarded as a material for the construction of artillery. Everything seems to show that if the bronze or brass of which a gun is composed be made hard enough to withstand friction and corrosion it is thereby rendered so brittle that it cannot endure the mechanical shock of the explosion; while if it is made with sufficient toughness

not to break it will be too soft to resist the burning energies of the ignited powder. To break or to bend seems to be the alternative; and a bronze gun which has held together has been known to bulge to such a degree as to render it useless. The disastrous experiments conducted at Aldershot have resulted in the announcement that "the manufacture of the 9-pounder bronze muzzle-loading field guns at the Royal Arsenal, Woolwich has for the present been discontinued." Great efforts have been made to prove that the superiority of the Prussian artillery has been due to the practice of breech-loading; but a far more potent reason of the inferiority of the French fire has been found in the fact that the French field artillery has consisted largely, if not wholly, of bronze guns.

**METEORS.**—Professor Rankine has written as follows relative to the meteor of November 19th, 1870.—"Accounts have appeared in the Scottish newspapers of a very large and bright meteor seen on the 19th instant, about 9 p.m. Greenwich time, from Edinburgh and from Carnwath (about thirty miles to the south-east of Glasgow). The meteor, as seen from Carnwath, is described as having passed from north-east to south-west, nearly overhead, and as having been followed by a rumbling sound after an interval of ninety seconds. In the immediate neighbourhood of Glasgow there was on that night a haze so thick as to conceal the stars; but the glare of light produced by the meteor was distinctly seen at thirty seconds before nine, Greenwich time. It lasted three or four seconds, and, judging by the distinctness with which it illuminated terrestrial objects, was considerably brighter than the light of the full moon. From the appearance of the sky in the quarter in which the light vanished the luminous object seemed to disappear in a southerly direction at an altitude of less than 30 deg. A rumbling sound followed, after an interval which was not accurately ascertained, but is believed to have been between three and five minutes, corresponding to a distance of between thirty-six and sixty miles."

**ARTIFICIAL GRAPHITE.**—Graphite, or plumbago, has been found in gneiss, mica slates, clay slates, limestones, and a variety of other rocks of different geological periods. Its origin has long been a matter of conjecture, and scientific men have not been able to agree upon it. Professor Wagner ascribes it to the decomposition of cyanogen and of the cyanides. The black mass which sometimes separates from hydrocyanic acid, on being washed in nitric acid and dried, is found to consist of scales of graphite. Dr. Wagner infers from this that the artificial graphite that is formed on the cooling of many varieties of iron has its origin in the same source, namely, cyanogen. It is not the carbon which is held in solution in the melted iron, but the cyanogen compounds, that give rise to the graphite. In the manufacture of soda by Le Blanc's process there is always a quantity of graphite formed, which is derived from the decomposed cyanogen compounds, and in some of the large establishments of Bohemia practical application is made of this incidental product in the manufacture of lead pencils. This theory of the origin of black-lead is worthy of attention, as it may lead to cheap methods for the artificial production of that valuable substance, and at the same time help to explain many difficult geological questions.

### THE "FUSEE SATAN."

**M. LAURENT**, the distinguished civil engineer and chemist of the Rue de Londres, Paris, has invented a rocket which will be a formidable engine of defence. He has christened it the "Fusée Satan." To the end of an ordinary rocket is attached a very slight receptacle of tin, having exactly the shape of a conical bullet. In this receptacle is arranged a chamber filled with a composition based, we believe, upon sulphuret of carbon, which composition, once lighted, gives out considerable heat. A fuse communicates from this chamber with the top of the rocket. The tin bullet is filled, just before being used, with petroleum oil. The lighted rocket rises in the air and traverses the space necessary to arrive over a certain spot. Arrived above its object, the rocket sets fire to the fuse, the composition in the chamber of the bullet takes light, bursts its envelope, and at the same time fires the petroleum, which falls like a sheet of flame and continues burning. This sheet of flame fills a space of sixteen to twenty-four square metres, according to the size of the rocket. No. 1 throws one litre of petroleum, No. 2 two litres, and No. 3 three litres.

They can be thrown a distance of six kilometres, and aimed with great precision, being balanced by means of a long stick attached to each rocket, which maintains the elevation given to it at the time of discharge. Some interesting experiments were made recently with this weapon at St. Cloud. In less than ten minutes a considerable space of ground was covered with a sea of fire. A committee composed of superior officers of artillery presided over the ex-

periments, and the general at their head was appalled by the terrible nature of this engine of destruction.

Just imagine this sea of fire falling upon the Prussian masses, burning everything, setting light to the cartridges in the soldiers' pouches and to the ammunition vans of the artillery. The committee, in its report, says the journal *Le France*, has declared in its opinion no civilised nation could make use of these rockets except for reprisals; and it would be only in case of the Prussians firing upon Paris with petroleum bombs, such as they used at Strasburg, that the defenders would be entitled to retaliate with the rocket. However this may be, the Committee of National Defence has given the inventor a large building on the Batignolle (formerly a girls' school), and has ordered the immediate manufacture, on a large scale, of Satan rockets. From day to day 200 workmen will be actively employed, and within a few days they will have a sufficient stock to enable them to repay the Prussians in their own coin, if, as at Strasburg, they make use of unlawful weapons.

### HOW GLASS PAPER WEIGHTS ARE MADE

EVERY one knows those paper weights of solid colourless glass, in a hemispherical shape, in the centre of which are bouquets, portraits, and even watches, barometers, etc., but few persons know how or by what means these things are incarcerated in the centre of the glass. There is a great distinction to be made, not merely between the objects, but also between the materials of which they are composed. As those representing flowers and bouquets in glass—those from which the name is derived—are the most ancient and the best known, we will begin with them.

The first thing to be done is to sort and arrange a certain quantity of small glass tubes of different colours in the cavities of a thick molten disc, disposing them according to the object to be represented. This done, the tubes are enclosed between two layers of glass. To do this they begin by placing on one side of the disc which contains the tubes a layer of crystal, to which the tubes soon become attached. When this is done the disc is removed, and a second layer of crystal is placed on the opposite side. The object being placed in the centre between these two layers of glass thus soldered together, it becomes necessary to shape the ball its hemispherical form, which is done when the crystal is again heated, by means of a concave spatula of moistened wood. It then only remains to anneal and to polish it on the wheels.

That a glass ornament, being covered with a layer of hot glass, should receive no injury or change of colour, may be easily understood from its extremely refractory nature; but it is not the same with objects in metal, such as watches, barometers, etc., which a far less degree of heat would oxidise or even entirely destroy. The mode of manufacture, therefore, of these latter objects is quite different from that of the first. It is easy enough to prove this. If we look at a paper weight, provided the interior be of glass, the upper and under part of the recipient will also be of glass. If we now examine a paper weight containing a watch or barometer, under the lower part of the ball will be found a piece of green cloth, the use of which is to keep in its place the objects which, instead of only forming one body with the covering of glass which surrounds them, are only placed in a cavity made beforehand in the centre of the half-spherical ball. In a word, to take out the glass ornaments it would be necessary to break the paper weight, whilst to take out the others it would suffice to take off the cloth. As for the paper weights in which are placed portraits, usually of a yellowish colour, these profiles are made of refractory earth, and many thus bear well a heat which only softens glass. Manufactured successively at Venice under the name of "millefiori," and then in Bohemia, these paper weights have been carried to perfection only by French artists. The sole difficulty in their manufacture is in avoiding internal air bubbles, which would the more deform the objects as any defect would be much increased by the thickness of the glass.

**BEEWAX.**—Huber, of Geneva, several years since found that bees did not obtain their wax entirely from plants; he kept some bees in a confined place and fed them entirely on honey, and they formed quite as much wax as when they were perfectly at liberty amongst the flowers. In this way he proved that wax, which is a true fat, was a secretion of the bee.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer has discovered that in many city firms it is the custom to pay employees partly by salary and partly by a commission on the profits, but that whereas the employees return the first for assessment to the income-tax, they forget to mention the second. So he is just now causing much perturbation in clerical circles by inquiries which he thinks very pertinent and they think very impertinent.





[ALONE WITH GRIEF.]

## THE LOST HEIRESS OF LATYMER.

### CHAPTER IX.

These tardy tricks of yours will, on my life,  
One time or other break some gallow's back.

Henry VI.

So unexpected was this meeting with Arundel that Parry was taken completely by surprise, and his hand shook nervously as it went to the hilt of his dagger. The earl gently laid his hand upon Parry's arm.

"You need not resort to that, sir," said Arundel, calmly, "for I have long odds in the possession of this," tapping the hilt of his sword. "No harm is intended to you, sir, whoever you are, and I desire only a word with you."

Parry dropped his hand again, but raised it to draw his cloak still closer about his face. As he did so a murderous thought filled his brain. He saw that the earl did not heed the motion—would it be possible for him to draw his dagger with as little suspicion?

Now was the time, he thought, for a settlement, and he made up his mind to fall upon Arundel and slay him on the spot. The earl read his intention well, and took a small silver whistle in his hand.

"Look there, sir, do you see my men? Perhaps it is too dark—nevertheless they are there, and in a moment would rush to my side. They are even now listening for my signal."

"I did not intend to attack you, sir," said Parry, feigning not to know with whom he was speaking. He hoped to pass unrecognised now that his villainous intention was defeated, and spoke in an impatient tone. "I am a peaceful merchant, sir, and am at a loss to know why you should address me here. You startled me, and I prepared myself for defence."

"You will have little need of defence unless from my followers. I wish but a few words with you; but, first, what were you saying about Latymer?"

"Whatever I said cannot concern a stranger."

"Perhaps not; at any rate you have the right of refusing to answer me," said the earl; "but there is one question to which I demand a reply. Standing in the garden of yonder cottage, I saw a man through the blinds. For reasons of my own I watched there until you came stealthily from the back gate, and I followed you here. Now, sir, who are you, and what have you to do with the inmates of that cottage?"

Parry saw, by this question, that the earl had not recognised him, and a reply was not long shaping itself in his mind.

"I am a merchant, sir stranger; Mark Lawton by name, and I was sent for to transact business with Dame Rachel Hatton. I tell you this, not on compulsion, but because I have nothing to conceal. Permit me to pass."

"One word more. What you say may be true; I'll not gainsay your word without proof; but I have doubts of the matter, although I may not assert them. Master Lawton, if that be your name, do you know Sir Christopher Hatton?"

"He has long dealt with me, and hence the Dame Rachel sent for me in his absence. But is it a generous thing, sir stranger, to stop a peaceable merchant only to insult him with your suspicions?"

"If I wrong you, Master Lawton, I will make amends. I am Lord Arundel."

"Pardon, my lord, I did not know you," said Parry, with affected humility.

"If I wrong you, prove it to me, and I will make ample amends. But meanwhile I advise you to have care in your visits to the cottage. There is treachery abroad, and an honourable merchant of London should not be associated with it."

"Your lordship does not think that I knew—"

"No matter," interrupted the earl, "until Sir Christopher returns I shall endeavour to protect his niece from the dangers which threaten her. Severe punishment shall fall upon one who attempts to harm her before I have put Sir Christopher upon his guard. You understand, Master Lawton? If you visit the cottage do so at seasonable hours, and make your exit from the front like an honest man. Do you understand, Master Lawton?"

"I am grateful to you, my lord, for giving me warning, so that I may save the good name of a merchant of London from suspicion. Shall I wish your lordship good night?"

"Good night, Master Lawton. Should you wish to establish your good name, bring any well-known merchant to my house, and I will receive you. But remember my warning."

Glad enough to get away, Parry walked on rapidly towards the city, while the earl went back to where he had left his horse and mounted servants.

"I do not credit his words," Arundel said to himself, "but my warning may suffice to make him cautious until something can be done for this unprotected girl. Lady Anne must see her."

To speak to Lady Anne again about Victorine was the earl's object now, and he rode home at a rapid

pace to prepare for a reception given that night by Lady Hertford. Lady Anne Wardour would be one of the guests.

He met his own valet at the door.

"Any news, François? Has anything been heard of the sailor?"

"Nothing, my lord, after a careful search. No bodies have been found in the river for the past three days."

"It is strange," said the earl, musingly; "but perchance he escaped. Keep up the search, François, and do not spare gold. It was no common seaman who shared the dangers of that night with me."

Later on Arundel made his way into Lady Hertford's crowded rooms. A brilliant company was already assembled. Glancing around him, the earl saw the wealth and beauty of London, with many a noble name, and among them several men who have been handed down in history as the brightest ornaments of Elizabeth's court.

Surrounded by a gay throng stood the brilliant Earl of Leicester, whose tall figure and beautiful face seemed to attract others to him easily and naturally, as the light of a candle draws the little night moths around it. Still another group gathered about the intellectual and manly Southampton; and in every nook the ruling favourites of the queen had gathered their coterie.

From one group to another roamed Arundel's glances, without finding the face and form he sought. Chatting a little here and there, but still roaming about to keep from being himself surrounded, he made a tour of the rooms. Lady Anne was not there.

"She must have gone out for a time," he said to himself, "and I will wait on the balcony for her. I have no heart for gossip to-night, so I must avoid all but her."

Seating himself upon the balcony overlooking the garden, he sat in silent thought, with the hum of a thousand voices in his ear. The night was warm, and from the garden came the sweet perfume of many flowers. A solitary nightingale broke into song from its perch in a neighbouring tree, and the earl turned his ear from the buzz of the crowd within to catch the heavenly melody.

But the bird had not ended the first bar of its strain before a voice which seemed sweeter far to the earl came up from the windows below. His heart thrilled with emotion as he recognised in the speaker the one whom he so dearly loved. The words came up to him clear and distinct.

"You have come, good Gilbert; sit by this window," said she, drawing a stool towards her; "have you been here long?"

"Not long, my lady; time does not seem long to me when in your service."

"Thank you, Gilbert; I believe you, but do not attempt compliments now. I have but a moment to stay with you."

The earl started back, as if to withdraw from the spot, while a pang of jealousy shot through his heart. "Surely," he told himself, "there can be no private matters discussed in so public a place." A strange fascination bound him to the spot, although his cheek seemed burning with shame at the thought of his being a voluntary listener. Still her voice held him spell-bound.

"He has not come, Gilbert; are you sure he was not wounded?"

"Very sure, my lady; I saw him on his horse but a few hours ago. He was coming from the cottage."

"Is she very beautiful, Gilbert?"

"Indeed, Lady Anne, such beauty is rare to find."

Something like a sigh seemed to come up on the night air, and for a moment Lady Anne said nothing.

"When do you have to sail, Gilbert?" she asked, presently.

"In a day or two at the farthest. Our captain was injured, and the vessel will sail as soon as a new master is appointed."

"Are you willing to endure the hardships of this life for my sake, Gilbert?"

"I do not find it hard to bear; but were it ten times as hard, I would bear it to serve you. I can never forget the debt of gratitude I owe you for kindness to my poor father."

"How is he, Gilbert?"

"He is well, and begs me tell your ladyship that to you he owes all the comforts which cheer his declining years."

"He was faithful to our family, and so much was due to him. He need not thank me for it."

"But he has no claim on you, Lady Anne."

"He has the very strongest claim, Gilbert; but you cannot understand the secrets of a woman's heart. Well, let me tell you—I have written to them by you, and you must manage to keep them on the Continent for a few months longer. I must know all, and the truth. Do not speak to me, Gilbert, do not speak of this to me. There is hope, and it could be consummated at once."

"Will your ladyship risk the chance?" interrupted the male voice.

"Yes, Gilbert, I must be sure that he loves me truly and well. I must be certain. Manage to detain them for a time, and perhaps—perhaps—"

"I pray that you may be righted, my lady. It is my dearest wish, if I may be pardoned for saying so. At any rate you will find a faithful servant in me."

"I am sure of it, Gilbert. I feel—"

A burst of music drowned the voices of the speakers, and Arundel heard no more. With many conflicting emotions he tore himself away, ashamed to catch another word. Had he paused but a moment longer the mystery would have been solved; but he now entered the crowded room, and, leaning against the wall with folded arms, gave himself up to thought.

"She has some sorrow," he thought, "some great trouble; would that I had the right to guard and shield her from it."

Of the man with whom Lady Anne was talking he no longer felt a doubt. He was not one of her own rank in life, and was probably some retainer or agent.

"Gilbert! I know of no one—stay, there was my old secretary, my faithful Gilbert; but he could not know Lady Anne. Besides, this was the voice of a younger man. Ah! she loves me not, I fear, yet I will soon know the worst. I will speak to her of this maiden first—then of myself."

How long he remained there in thought Arundel could not tell, but he was suddenly roused by Lady Anne's voice near him, and, glancing up, saw her chatting gaily with half a dozen gallants.

It was with great difficulty that he at length reached her side, but he could not draw her from the tone of gay trifling that she had assumed. Looking into her pure eyes, he thought of the words he had heard, but every doubt vanished from his mind. He could not look at that beautiful face and entertain a doubt of her honesty and truth.

"Will you step upon the balcony for a few moments, Lady Anne?" he asked as she took his proffered arm for a promenade; "I should like to speak to you alone—to enlist your sympathies in behalf of one every way worthy of them."

"To speak of your new protégé, perhaps," said she, with a slight curl of the lip; "I have heard that she is very beautiful. Do you find her so, my lord?"

"She is beautiful, Lady Anne—she is like my cousin, Lady Latymer."

"Here was a beauty rarely found, Lord Arundel—is this girl really like her?"

"Strikingly so. I am sure, Lady Anne, it will prove a resemblance that you will recognise. She is as good as she is beautiful."

"How romantic—you save her from drowning—gratitude to her preserver, followed by love—she is proved to be a princess in disguise—happy discovery—happy termination, like the Italian tales and romances." She spoke with a sarcasm that nearly reached bitterness. "My lord, permit me to congratulate you on your good fortune."

"You are cruel, Lady Anne, to speak so to me. I came to-night expressly to ask your sympathy and interest for her."

"Highly flattering, my lord; then it is due to her alone that we have the honour of your presence."

"Do not—do not speak so, I implore you. It is not just to me or to yourself."

"I but repeated your own assertion in its logical conclusion. Do you wish me to see this girl to advocate your cause? Surely, Lord Arundel need not fear to propose for the hand of a peasant girl."

"Again you are cruelly sarcastic, Anne. If you did but know her—"

"But how am I to find this paragon of earthly and angelic loveliness, supposing that I should decide to advance your suit?"

He was inexpressibly annoyed at the tone and manner that she had adopted upon this subject, yet he remained calm under the torture she was inflicting, and gave her Victorine's address.

She listened to him almost scornfully, and interrupted him but once to murmur something about love in a cottage. But for all her sarcasm Lord Arundel saw that she was strangely agitated. A bright spot burned on either cheek, and her voice was saved from tremor only by the rapidity of her speech. She gave him no time to speak.

"Perhaps I may see her for your lordship's sake," said she, with rapid utterance, "perhaps to gratify my own curiosity. So she is your ideal of female beauty?"

"Have I said so, Anne? Why will you be so cruel to me when you know that I am suffering now for my love?"

"Ah! my lord, then I will promise to see her. I did not think it so serious a matter," she interrupted, quickly, while a laugh was mingled with her railery. But the smile on her lip died away when she saw his pale and suffering face.

"You seem deeply moved, my lord; am I cruel for lack of seriousness on a subject so near your heart?"

"Oh, Lady Anne! you distress me beyond measure by this—"

"Indeed, I do not intend it. Let me be serious, then, while you tell me again of her beauty and her worth."

"Anne, hear me; do you not know that every throb of my heart is for—"

"Let us walk, my lord—the rooms are warm—I am suffocating."

"Come to the air," he said, anxiously contemplating her moistened eyes and deeply flushed cheeks.

"Come to the air—let me aid you to the balcony."

"Not there; let me go to my room—I am faint. I must go, my lord—at once."

The words seemed to choke her in their utterance, and her agitation could no longer be concealed. Hastily breaking away from him, but giving him one tender, beseeching look from her tear-dimmed eyes, she hurried from the room.

She was a guest at Lady Hertford's house, and immediately rushed to her own chamber.

For one moment she stood irresolute, trying to find courage to return and confess her folly and her fears, then threw herself upon a couch, and buried her burning face in her hands.

"Heaven help me!" she cried, from the depths of her distressed heart. "Heaven help me, for if he loves this maiden I shall die. I cannot endure this longer. Oh, Philip! my love, my darling, if you could but know how I love you!"

Who can account for the perversity of the human heart? Loving him as she did, and knowing that he waited only an opportunity—a single word or look of encouragement—to lay his heart at her feet, yet did she not dare to accept the gift that seemed priceless to her.

Later on in this history the reader will fully understand the bitter suffering and torture which wrung from the beautiful Lady Anne Wardour this pitiful cry.

#### CHAPTER X.

Reason and love keep little company nowadays.

*Midsummer Night's Dream.*

OVERLOOKING the garden of the cottage, from the balcony of which could be seen the river with its scenes of busy life, was one latticed window, at which Victorine Hatton spent many an hour in quiet thought. Here she looked out upon the world to learn and to

wonder; here she dreamed of her mysterious past and of the unknown future. Perplexed herself as she might, there was no solution to the problem; and now her brain had a new occupation, and her heart throbbed more wildly when her mind entered upon it. For the first time in her short career she was dreaming of love.

The earl a day or two before had paused a moment at the gate to present his companion, a young man who seemed to her an Antinous indeed. She had trembled beneath young Henry Percy's ardent gaze even before she had caught the rich music of his voice.

But a moment had they been there when Dame Rachel came to draw her away; then she had gone to the balcony to collect her puzzled brain, and to make sure that it was not all a dream. Was this young man—as handsome as a god—was he real, or was he some fairy prince who had come to dazzle and bewilder her?

Ten days had passed since they arrived at the cottage, and during that time events of great importance to many persons had crowded on each other. Sir Christopher had brought the maiden there, thinking that in London the surest solution could be found.

As a general proposition this would be true. To ordinary minds and common characters a city offers unparalleled solitude; but to those higher, self-asserting natures, remarkable for great power either of great genius or great beauty, it offers the surest field for renown. How was Sir Christopher to know that his attempt to rear this maiden as a peasant girl had proved a failure?

Hundreds of maidens have lived in and around London, year after year, without attracting a remark, almost unknown beyond the limits of their own homes—why should he suppose that this friendless one could be other than they? But Victorine was not one to live in seclusion. First, her remarkable beauty drew people around her; then her romantic story, which even the dame failed to conceal, gave interest to her life; and, lastly, her own amiability and worth bound them in ties of friendship.

The cottage was soon filled with guests, and day after day they came, first from curiosity, then for love of this singularly beautiful maiden. More than this, the fact that Victorine was visited by people of quality made her an object of interest to the neighbours. The carriage and liveries of a great court lady, it was whispered about, were daily seen at the cottage gate.

True to her promise, Lady Anne Wardour called on the maiden, and found her all that report had promised. She had to confess that the rumours of her beauty were not exaggerated, while her winning, confiding manner was exceedingly charming. In an hour they were firm friends.

Again and again Lady Anne listened to Victorine's story, and tried to connect it with something that clung to her memory of the past. In this she could but fail, although the resemblance to Lady Latymer, mentioned by Lord Arundel, was very striking. She could not see how it could be, yet was unable to drive away the feeling that this lonely girl was in some way connected with that family.

"You are so like her, Victorine—you have her very face as she looked some ten years ago, when her misfortunes came," Lady Anne said one day as she was preparing to leave the cottage.

"What were the misfortunes of which you speak?" asked Victorine.

"They were sad enough; it is a gloomy story, and I should not tell it to you."

Victorine's hand stole into Lady Anne's, and she looked up with appealing eyes.

"I should like to hear it, Lady Anne—tell me, if you may, that is, if there is no reason why I may not hear it."

"There is no secret in the story; it is simply this: Some years ago I knew Lady Latymer well, and she was kind to me when others were harsh and cruel. At that time she was very happy. Married to one she loved, the possessor of a vast domain, a magnificent home, surrounded by all that wealth and luxury could bring, she seemed like one destined to be free from all human cares."

"But all too soon the destroyer came. A nephew of Lord Latymer determined to possess the estates, and managed to embroil the noble Latymer in some quarrel with the crown. To make a short story of it, he was literally hunted to death. But one person now stood in the way of this feud—a little girl, who was then between five and six years of age."

Victorine was listening intently, with both hands pressed over her heart, while her bosom heaved with the strength of her inward emotions. Was she about to find some clue to her lost parents? It seemed so at that moment. But soon the hope was dashed to earth.

"Lady Latymer was prostrated by the death of her lord," continued Lady Anne, "and for a week seemed to be oblivious of all about her. One day she



re-used herself sufficiently to call for her little girl. Then the dreadful truth had to be told—the child had been missing for three days, nor could any clue be found.

"Nearly frantic, Lady Latymer rose from her bed, as ill as she was, and with almost superhuman energy conducted the search. It was not until all hope was lost that the child was discovered; but, alas! she was then a corpse.

"The nephew came to Lady Latymer, and, with an appearance of contrition, told her that he had stolen the child, but had meant it no harm. He had cut off the golden hair, which might lead to detection, and stained the fair little face, when she was with a woman in the vicinity.

"Grieving for the loss of her mamma, the poor little thing became ill, and died in twenty-four hours. She was now in a coffin, waiting to be brought back to Latymer for burial.

"Such was the story told by this villain. Lady Latymer rose from her bed when the little corpse was brought to the hall, but after a single glance fell senseless upon the coffin. For weeks she was unconscious."

"Did the poor lady recognise her child?" asked Victorine, with bated breath.

"Yes, I presume she did. So it was said at the time, and she had but a faint recollection of it afterwards. There is little doubt that she would have detected any fraud. The villain was now the heir, and drove Lady Latymer from her home. Against the advice of her friends, she went to France, where she died two years later. Thus a happy family was destroyed by one scheming villain."

"What a wretch he must have been. I wonder that Heaven permits such wicked men to live and prosper."

"Nor did it either. In six months his punishment came. He was found murdered on his own estate. Report said that the assassin was one who had aided him in his nefarious plans, and with whom he had broken faith."

"Do you think he killed this little girl?" "Perhaps not—he was too cowardly to do it himself. His agents did it, beyond a doubt, but the crime was never detected. It nearly killed Lady Latymer to lose her poor little Lucy."

"Lucy!" exclaimed Victorine, with a sudden cry. "Yes, that was the name. A bright and beautiful little fairy she was—such as you must have been at six."

"Was there no doubt?"

Victorine began to give expression to a hope which was filling her brain, but paused for lack of words.

"No doubt of her death?" Lady Anne asked. Victorine bowed.

"None. Lady Latymer saw the body, and recognised it when she fell senseless upon it. She never again seemed to recover her senses fully, and would always talk wildly upon that subject."

The maiden sighed deeply. One of the hopes which had been raised in her mind was thus destroyed completely; but even if she could not find a clue in the name of Latymer, she was satisfied that sooner or later some indication of her parentage must appear.

It was painful to have the assurance that the little girl had really died, for she had not cried out when the name was mentioned without cause. One of the relics of her mother, left in France, bore the simple word "Lucy," and hence she had cried out with joy when the name was pronounced.

Had there been the slightest doubt of the death of little Lucy Latymer, she would have told Lady Anne of the relics, but her emotion at the moment made her forget to do so.

Lady Anne noticed her agitation, but attributed it to the influence of the sad story she had told. She turned to say good-bye.

"I must go now, Victorine, and it will seem long before I can see you again. For the next week I am on duty at the palace, and must attend her majesty; but as soon as possible you shall see me here again."

"Do not forget me; dear lady, if you know how much I love you, could you feel how much joy your friendship gives to me, even charity would bring you back to me. Your heart is tender and good—let me possess some little of it for my own."

She spoke rapidly and eloquently, her passionate words appealing strongly to the lady's heart.

"You shall have it, my friend—my sweet friend, do not doubt my love for you. You shall find a true friend in me; and if in my power the mystery of your birth shall be made clear. I will see Sir Christopher himself. Adieu, adieu!"

With one warm embrace they clasped each other, then, tearing herself away, Lady Anne sprang into her carriage.

Victorine leaned her cheek upon the gate and gazed after the rapidly retreating coach with a sense of desolation she had never felt before.

Peering through the lattice was the sinister face of Dame Rachel, who found herself foiled at every turn by the guileless simplicity and truthful honesty of her charge.

Trouble was brewing for the dame. Despite her efforts, the circle of the maiden's friends was rapidly enlarging. The earl had called, and had sent both kindly greetings and presents. He had even brought young Percy there to dazzle the maiden, and perhaps to win away her heart. He had sent Lady Anne there, and now these two had become fast friends—binding themselves together by a chain which the dame could not break or sever by treachery.

Sir Christopher had gone to his estate; Parry had not been at the cottage since the evening that he met the earl.

"What can I do?" the dame asked herself; "what can I do alone to stop this growing interest in her? They leave me here to do what I cannot do, and they will blame me if I fail. I must find Parry or all is lost."

"What is lost, dame?" came a voice from the shrubbery near her. She was sitting by the cottage door in the rapidly declining twilight. Victorine had retired to her chamber.

"Oh, Parry, you frightened me. Come in quickly. I was just wishing for you."

"Where is—?" "Above—keep under the balcony. She may be out," said the dame, in a whisper.

Parry sprang across the short open space, and was hidden beneath the balcony, when a noise above told him that Victorine was coming to her favourite seat.

"What is the matter now, dame?"

"Matter? Matter enough, Parry. You leave me here to do your bidding, and expect me to perform impossible things. I can't prevent her friends from coming here. It seems to me that half London has been here within the past week. They will come to see her in spite of me."

"Who comes to see her?"

"Why, haven't I told you? Lord Arundel comes, and Lady Anne Wardour; and everybody about here. The earl brought a gallant here whom he called Percy."

"Henry Percy?" exclaimed Parry, in surprise; "has he been here?"

"That he has, and I could not stop him, though I took her away from them at once."

"This is growing serious," Parry said to himself, while the dame was going on with her story. "I can wait no longer. The queen does not notice my memorial, and I must urge it upon her. Meantime the girl must not remain here. I told them she would be at my villa soon, and it must be sooner than I expected when I laid the wager. If Sir Christopher hear that she has been visited by strangers, he will take her away. Once in my power, she shall not fall into his hands until I have his pledge."

"You'll not harm her, Parry?" asked Rachel, who had overheard some of Parry's soliloquy.

"Do not fear, dame. All my interest is in her preservation. Does that satisfy you?"

"I should not like her injured."

"Nor shall she be," interrupted Parry, impatiently. "I can assure you of that, dame. Now listen to me: Whatever is done by me is beyond your power, and you cannot be made responsible for it. She must be taken away from this place at once, but beyond a forced confinement no harm shall come to her. Take her for a walk to-morrow evening; and when you return you shall have fifty golden guineas."

It was not until Parry had used the threats which had so often intimidated the weak woman that he made her promise to do his bidding, and she was sobbing bitterly when he rose to leave the cottage.

"Tell Sir Christopher that she was taken from you by force; and you need say no more. Of course you will not know the man who do it. There! there! Rachel, dry your tears, and call her from the window so that I can get out."

Dame Rachel called the maiden from her retreat on the balcony, and, as her step was heard on the landing, Parry left the cottage porch and stole away unperceived.

Unperceived? No; some one saw him—one who had long been watching beyond the garden, and followed on to the city to report his discovery to the earl. Lord Arundel was sitting with his friend, young Henry Percy, when his agent entered. The man looked at Percy ere he spoke; but the earl bade him proceed, and he related what he had seen.

"It is the same, doubtless," said the earl; "the description answers for Master Lawton, so far as I could see him in the dark, if that be his name. We must find him out!"

"I will see to it myself," said Percy, impetuously. "To-morrow I will take this good man's place, and, should he again come out by stealth, I will force him to give some good account of himself."

"Do not use violence, Percy; it would be doing

her a wrong to have her name linked with a street brawl, no matter how innocent she may be."

"Yet will I see that he meditates no ill to her," the young man replied; and after a few more words bade his friend adieu.

(To be continued.)

## THE DIAMOND MERCHANT.

### CHAPTER XXVIII.

For security  
No lady closer; for I will believe  
Thou wilt not utter what thou dost not know.  
2 Henry IV.

SIR EDRD, greatly in need of rest, soon fell asleep also, and awoke not until a hand was laid upon his shoulder.

He sprang to his feet instantly, sword in hand, for he imagined some enemy had assailed him. But the voice of his guide called out:

"My faith, Sir Edrd, you are supple of limb! All is well, and it is time we were on our journey."

"Why, it is night again!" exclaimed Sir Edrd, for he could barely discern the form of the guide in the gloom.

"The sun has just set," replied Anselm, "but in this shade it seems night. Follow me. Our horses are ready, and ere midnight, if all goes well, we shall arrive at the 'Iron Hand' inn."

In a few minutes the guide and Sir Edrd were again in their saddles, threading the many and devious paths of the great forest, all of which were well known to Anselm.

Leaving Sir Edrd on his way, it is necessary that we should speak of the movements of Sir Fritz, after his defeat in that series of battles which placed the barons in possession of the Riders' chief fortress, called the Rock.

The Rock was, in truth, the foundation and eminence in that part of the Bohemian forest on which, ages before the date of our story, the first fortress of the three which were included in the general name The Rock had been built. The eminence had been known by that title long before the hand of man erected any edifice upon it, and now, when three strong castles, with their various defences and additions, had been erected there, the entire place retained the name by which it was known when the legions of Caesar invaded Germany—the Rock.

It was from the last defence of this stronghold that Sir Fritz fled, sorely wounded, when he saw that his partisans were utterly routed by the barons.

Many of those who had supported him fled with him, but the fear of pursuit and desire for concealment separated the fugitives, and on the night after that battle which threw Aldort into his dungeon, Sir Fritz found himself alone in the heart of the forest, and many miles from the Rock.

He had abandoned the horse upon which he had fled, and the going down of the sun found him, weak and faint, and barely able to stand erect, upon the bank of a narrow and swiftly running torrent, which flowed into a great basin a mile below the spot where he made his first halt. Into this basin, which was half a mile in area, fell a sheet of water from the edge of a precipice more than a hundred feet in height. This cataract, in a single unbroken sheet, many yards in width, fell like an enormous apron over the breast of the precipice, concealing its rocky, jagged front, and the cavern at its base.

The clouds of spray and mist caused by the cataract as its headlong stream struck the waters of the basin hid a narrow ledge by which one could readily pass behind the sheet of water, and so enter the cavern before whose yawning mouth the falling waters were a perpetual veil.

In this cavern, or rather in one of its upper chambers—for the hand of Nature had fashioned within it many apartments—dwelt Sada Probst, once the servant of the house of Altenburg, the nurse who had had charge of that young prince, Egbert Richard, of whose mysterious disappearance we have heard. Eather Warmly told Ida Le Clair.

When Sir Fritz halted upon the brink of the stream, a mile above the cataract's base, his only desire was to gain access to this cavern. But in order to do this it was necessary first to gain a foothold upon the narrow ledge or shelf of rock which ran along the face of the precipice at one side of its base, a few feet above the level of the agitated waters of the basin into which the cataract fell.

The ledge was invisible to human eyes until the clouds of mist which ever enshrouded it were passed or deeply penetrated, and its very existence was known to but few. The few who were aware of its existence, of the access it gave to the cavern and of the cavern itself, were Sir Fritz and his half-brother, the imprisoned Aldort, and those who were within the cavern at the time of which we write.

Immediately after halting on the rocky bank of the torrent, a mile above the basin which received the waters of the great cataract, Sir Fritz waded into the stream, and then, with the water up to his armpits, disappeared under an over-hanging rock, in which was a long, low cave.

He soon reappeared, pushing a broad, shallow, flat-bottomed boat before him until he reached the shallow water near the spot where he had first halted. Then, getting into the boat, he used the two oars with which it was furnished, and floated boldly out upon the rushing torrent.

The swift waters swept him with terrific speed towards the basin a mile below, and he used all his strength and skill to guide his boat so that he should be carried across the basin to the unseen ledge within the eternal clouds of mist.

Should he fail to come within reach of the ledge, which, as we have said, was invisible to any one floating upon the basin, he would be swept either under the cataract and drowned, or be hurried on to the rapids on the other side of the basin, and hurled over another great cataract less than a mile below.

To fail to reach the ledge was to be hurried to certain death.

This Sir Fritz well knew; but accident having first made him aware of the existence of the ledge and the cavern to which it gave access, he had often performed the hazardous feat of boldly steering into the perpetual mist, which, when entered, were far more transparent than they appeared at a distance.

Therefore he soon found himself near enough to the ledge to grasp its damp edge, to fasten his boat to an iron staple he had formerly driven into the rock, and then to climb from the boat to the ledge. The latter was less than three feet wide, but more than a hundred feet long, and ending at the mouth of the cavern. This was at the centre of the base of the precipice, the cataract falling over it like an immense apron.

Along this narrow shelf Sir Fritz now moved with great difficulty. His strength was nearly exhausted; he was surrounded by total darkness, and the spray from the vast volume of falling water behind which he was drenched him to the skin and chilled his blood like ice.

Only his fearless courage, his fierce pertinacity of purpose, and his desire to live to take vengeance upon the barons, as well as to escape the eager pursuit and search he knew would be made for him, enabled him to pass slowly along the ledge, crawling on his hands and knees, until he entered the mouth of the cavern. There he sank down upon a bed of sand and pebbles, crying out, with all his strength: "Rescue! rescue!"

This cry filled the hollow vaults of the cavern, and seemed repeated here and there in the distance, as it echoed through the depths.

Having uttered this cry three times, Sir Fritz could do no more, but sank into complete insensibility.

His cries, however, had been heard in one of the upper vaults of the cavern, and to this apartment we now lead the reader—that is, to the place where Sada Probstar then was.

The apartment had been the work of nature, yet was remarkably like such as might have been designed by man. It was large, nearly square, and had a lofty roof. The floor of rock was perfectly level, and covered with rich carpeting. The walls too, were covered with tapestry. There was a great fireplace at one end, in which a brilliant fire was burning. The chimney of this fireplace was an excavation through the solid rock of the precipice; and at times the hissing of the flames proved that water dripped down it from its unseen termination, which was in the face of the precipice over which the great cataract plunged.

There were two windows also, cut by the hand of man, to admit such light of day as might penetrate the great curtain of falling waters, the wall on that side being not two feet thick. As it was after sunset, no light now entered at these windows, but that of the wood fire brilliantly lighted up the apartment.

The furniture of the room was such as was to be found only in the abodes of the rich, and had been carried thither by Sir Fritz, from time to time, for the use of his mother, Sada Probstar.

She was a woman who had been beautiful in her youth; but age, remorse, baffled ambition and occasional madness had long since hardened or swept away all lines of beauty, and had left a pale, dark visage, at times sad, at times fierce, and sometimes that of a maniac.

At the moment we introduce her she sat in a large arm-chair, with her long gray hair falling in dishevelled masses around her face and over her shoulders. Her upper garment was a long, loose robe of black, of rich material.

At the time when Sir Fritz was crossing the basin on his way to the cavern she was sitting with her gaunt, skeleton-like hands resting upon the arms of her chair, and her dark, sad eyes staring into the blazing embers.

Apart from her were seated two women, whispering together, but with their eyes ever warily turned towards the person in the chair.

These two women were Bethla and Janet, the two attendants who were separated from their mistress, Lady Van De Veer, when she was set free by Sir Fritz. Bethla was a woman of about thirty, a blonde, with piercing gray eyes, features regular, masculine, and not far from being handsome. There was a hard, bold, treacherous expression in her eyes, though her voice was singularly soft and fascinating.

Janet was much younger than Bethla, of mild and pleasant face and speech, timid and faithful. She was devotedly attached to Lady Van De Veer, and her gentle blue eyes had been moist and sad ever since her separation from her.

"Oh!" whispered Janet, "can it be possible that we are to be imprisoned in this fearful cavern all our lives, or until this old woman dies? What a fate!"

"I shall take care to make her life very short," replied Bethla, "if my stay here depends upon the length of her days. But since the chief of the Elders, Sir Fritz, has seen fit to seize upon us to be attendants upon this woman, why, if I can, I will make him love me. Oh, if Baron Senlis of Karlwald only knew I was here! I did him a great favour once—him and his father—and they owe me something in return. Besides, I have a secret to tell them."

"Our master, Sir Edred, will certainly ransom us."

"It is my belief that Sir Edred is dead."

"Oh, good Heaven!"

"So I do not look to him for help. If I could only find a way to get out of this cavern."

"I am afraid to seek for one, Bethla."

"I have been all over the vile place," said Bethla, "and there is no way to get out, except that by which we came in—the ledge, you remember, and the horrible water, which we cannot cross without a boat, nor even then, I fear."

"She gives us very little trouble," remarked Janet, with a nod at Sada.

"True, she has scarcely opened her lips since we saw her. She doesn't bother her head about us, for she knows we cannot escape. Wait until she goes mad."

"Goes mad?"

"Oh, I have been afraid to tell you all that Sir Fritz said to me," said Bethla. "We are here to attend upon his mother, and she is subject to fits of madness, sometimes very violent ones."

"Oh, good mercy! Why have you not told me this before?" whispered Janet, trembling.

"Because Sir Fritz—to whom I have taken a great fancy—told me to say nothing about it to you, unless I should see signs of a fit of that kind."

"Oh, Heaven, deliver me! And do you tell me so now because you see such signs, Bethla?" asked Janet, shuddering and staring in terror at the woman in the chair.

"Bind my arms! Bind me to my chair!" here cried Sada, in a hollow voice. "My fit is coming upon me!"

"Sol Sir Fritz told me she would give warning of the fit," said Bethla as she snatched up a coil of rope and proceeded to secure the unfortunate woman to the chair.

"I am going wild," said Sada, in a hollow, tremulous voice, as Bethla bound her. "All that I may say in my fit is delirium. Give no heed to it. I may be as mute as a stone. I may rave. The fit may last a day, or a month. I would that Aldort were here, and not you. I hate him; yet he is used to this, and you are not. But Sir Fritz said I must have women's hands about me, since, in my last fit, I strove to tear off my garments. Heed nothing that I may say. If I die you will never leave this cavern—dead or alive. Remember that! I may speak secrets that should not be spoken—I know I shall. So attend to me carefully in my madness. If I die you are doomed. Do not let me harm myself. I may plead and struggle for freedom, but see to it that I am well bound, until a sickness like death relieves me. I may be mad a day, or a month. Remember that. I may hold my tongue to the end. Heaven grant that I may. But if I cry out, and speak wildly, and mention great names, heed them not—remember them not—speak not of them to each other."

In this disjointed, incoherent manner Sada Probstar spoke as Bethla, with a calm face but glittering eyes, stood by her after the bonds had been made fast. Janet stood aloof, trembling, for the scene terrified her.

Bethla was a woman who loved to light upon a mystery. At such times her talent for intrigue and unravelling of riddles came into full play. The secret

manner in which Sir Fritz, with only one other, Aldort, had conveyed her and Janet to this strange cavern, in which they were to attend upon a singular woman, fired Bethla's mind and heart with a desire to solve a mystery which her shrewdness told her must exist.

Therefore her situation had been far less frightful to her than to the gentle-minded Janet. Since her arrival at the cavern she had roamed into every part of it, lighting her way with a lamp. A bold, masculine woman, eager and persistent, she had roamed about fearlessly.

She had a contempt for ghosts, and a defiance for everything. She had visited every one of the many vaults, passages and chambers of the great cavern, which, with its numerous halls, cells, apartments and windings, was more than a square mile in area.

Standing near Sada, after she had bound her, Bethla said:

"It is done, my lady. Have you any other command for me?"

"You are near me?"

"Yes, my lady, to serve you."

"You look strangely like one I used to know—years ago—years ago," said Sada, staring at her. "How old are you?"

"Not thirty, my lady. I am sure you never saw me until the other day."

"My mind is whirling; yet, I remember when my eyes first fell on your face I saw something I used to know," remarked Sada, with an evident effort to keep from saying too much. "But I am going wild. Do not heed what I say."

"Since you command it, my lady," said Bethla, in her soft, charming voice, though the hardness of her eyes was like that of a diamond, and as glittering.

"The voice, too," cried Sada, plainly more excited. "But not thirty years old; you should be sixty, with that face and that voice."

"It is a young face, and a full-toned voice, my lady."

"Yes—the face and the voice of Zulme Right."

"Zulme Right!" repeated Bethla to herself much startled. "It was my mother's name. Can this woman have known my mother?"

"Ha! you are Zulme Right!" cried Sada. "No—that cannot be, since she would be an old woman now. It is years ago—and she was more than thirty then. She had a daughter—Lena—Lena Right—Lena, who disappeared with the first-born son of Prince Eustace of Zurichbold."

"My name is Bethla Storret, and I have never borne any other name," replied Bethla, but Janet noticed that her cheek became suddenly very pale.

"If you are not Zulme Right," cried Sada, wildly, "you are of her family—they all looked alike. I say you are. I suspected it the instant my son led you to me—but I have sense enough to hold my tongue. I am wild now. Don't heed what I say."

"Of course not, my lady."

"It does not matter if you do—for I am mad now!" exclaimed Sada.

"Yes, my lady," replied Bethla; then she said to Janet: "The fit is on her. You heard her call me by a name I never knew of before—Lena Right!"

"My son is a Van Arden!" here cried Sada. "He shall be Baron of Zweibrücken! I am rightful Baroness of Zweibrücken. Baron Hermann drove me mad! Lady Wolvina was not his lawful wife. I am his lawful wife!"

"What strange fancies she has, poor woman," whispered Janet.

"Silence!" whispered back Bethla, fearing the current of Sada's thoughts might be broken. "Stop your ears, for she may rave and howl dreadfully presently. Mad people do sometimes."

"My son shall be Prince of Zurichbold!" here screamed Sada. "Oh, if he only had 'Baron Hermann's Seal' on his breast—like the princely Altenburge! I could push on to success then! But he has it not—and cunning old Sir David would demand the presence of the seal—Baron Hermann's Seal!"

"What can she mean by that?" whispered Janet.

"There is no sense in what she raves."

"No, none at all," replied Bethla. "We are to heed nothing she says. Take the lamp and get wine from the store-room. She needs some. Go. Here—let me stuff your ears. Sir Fritz told me she would say the most horrible things! You might faint when she begins to shriek!"

"No, no! I shall not faint," replied Janet, unwilling to have her ears stopped up. "There, she is quiet now; her eyes are shut. Oh, she opens them again!"

"Yes," said Sada, in a vacant way, "if my son had the birth-mark—the red hand on the breast!"

"Good Heavens!" whispered Janet to Bethla. "That is the birth-mark on our young master's breast—on Master Ernest's breast."



"Peace! We are to heed nothing that she may say. She is raving," replied Bethla.

"None may have that mark," continued Sada, who was staring at the fire, and apparently unconscious of the presence of the women—"none may have that mark—Baron Hermann's Seal"—except the true Altenburgs—the Altenburgs descended from Princess Velina, wife of great Prince Egbert the Bold. Ah, if Fritz had that, he should now be in the place of Prince Eustace. I could deceive all. But only the true Altenburgs, the princely Altenburgs, can be born with that mark."

"My faith!" said Janet to Bethla, "my young master Ernest hath that mark."

"Hold your tongue!"

"But, Bethla, is it not strange that she says such things?" persisted Janet. "I have heard Lady Van De Veer say that on Sir Edred's breast is the same red hand—"

"What?" almost shrieked Bethla.

"Heavens! Why do you scream at me in that way?" asked Janet, amazed by the sudden agitation of her companion.

"You say Lady Louise told you her husband, Sir Edred, bears a birth-mark on his bosom?"

"Yes. I have been in her service a long time—before she wedded Sir Edred," replied Janet, "and she speaks confidently with me—"

"I know, I know. It's only recently that I entered her service," whispered Bethla. "She told you Sir Edred had a mark on his breast like that upon Master Ernest's?"

"The very same, only larger. It is not strange that Master Ernest has it, you know, as Sir Edred has, for Sir Edred is his father."

"Ah," thought Bethla, and careful to hold her tongue. "It is because I know Ernest is not the son of Sir Edred that I am amazed."

But at that moment came, pealing and roaring through the cavern, the wild and echoed cries of Sir Fritz:

"Rescue! rescue! rescue!"

(To be continued.)

## THE EARL'S SECRET.

### CHAPTER IV.

Oh, conspiracy!  
Sham'st thou to show thy dangerous brow by night  
When evils are most free? Julius Cæsar.  
It was the sixteenth of June.

The sun was just rising in stately splendour. Early as it was, the earl had breakfasted, and a carriage, with his lordship's valet equipped for a journey, was in waiting to take him to the railway station.

A feeling more nearly allied to happiness than Lord Walsingham had experienced in a long time filled his heart and lit up his handsome face.

Valeria, sole child of his house, and the idol of his heart, would, before another sunrise, be clasped in his arms. Silvermere would no longer be to him a desolate place. Lady Walsingham's whims and caprices would no longer have power to shroud his mind in perpetual gloom, for his child would bring the bright, cloud-dispelling sunshine with her. Her joyous nature knew no part of gloom or sorrow in itself, and, like the sun, it imparted its genial warmth to all around.

Lady Walsingham did not breakfast with the earl—in fact it was seldom she did. But she was up and dressed, and from the oriel window of her boudoir was watching for his departure.

There was nothing wild in her eyes now as the mellow sunlight let fall its first beams on her patient face. The look so often chilling to the blood of even stout-hearted Merton was gone, and a soft, yearning light had taken its place. A sweet half-smile rested on her lips, and her whole aspect bespoke a feeling of tender hope.

Her ladyship, too, was thinking of Lady Valeria. The sun was creeping to the top of the tallest trees in the park, and still the countess stood like a statue in the window, and still the carriage waited by the porch, while the richly caparisoned steeds pawed the ground and fretted at the coachman's tightening curb. Within the library the earl was impatiently pacing to and fro, waiting to see whether the message he had sent, an hour before, to Lady Walsingham would bring her down to see him before his departure.

The message had been delivered, but the countess gave no heed to its summons, until suddenly, as though memory reminded her of something of importance, she started from her reverie, crossed the room rapidly, reached the corridor, and descended the broad staircase to the porch where the earl was about to enter the carriage. Her ladyship glided to the side of her husband and laid a detaining hand on his arm.

"Hugh, you will find him and bring him home?" Earl Walsingham's eyes dropped, and his face took a deathly hue. The countess scanned his countenance with a feverish gaze. He tried to shake off her hand, but the slender, jewelled fingers only tightened their hold.

"Tell me, Hugh, will you bring him?"

"Can I bring the dead to life?" asked the nobleman, in hollow accents, and without raising his eyes.

"No, Hugh, no! But you can bring back the heir of Haldimand to his inheritance! You can bring him back to me! He will hate me at first and refuse to come to the stepmother who has suffered him to be a wanderer so long! But I have suffered, too; you must tell him so, and that I wait with open arms to receive him. With one arm I will clasp my daughter to my heart, and the other shall embrace him. Then I will join their hands together and bid my children be happy, and you and I, Hugh, can go to our graves in peace!"

The earl shuddered, and stood mute, with drooping figure and eyes still downcast. The blue orbs of the countess blazed with feverish heat as she continued:

"Tell the boy I am waiting, at last, willing to fulfil my promise to his dying father."

She turned her sorrowful face upwards to the clear sky.

"Oh, Gregory! look down and see and know that I mean to do right at last by your boy!"

The countess released the arm of his lordship, and, sitting down upon one of the marble steps, burst into tears. With a few constrained words to his weeping wife, the earl entered the carriage and was driven rapidly away.

Soon Merton came down and with soothing words enticed her ladyship back to her beautiful but lonely rooms.

The earl's departure was not the only one which took place from Silvermere that morning.

Long before the sun was up or the lark astir Mrs. Gabron, the housekeeper, was equipped for a journey.

With the plea that her sister, who lived in London, was ill, perhaps dying, she had obtained a week's leave of absence from her duties. The butler's niece, in the meantime, was to take her place.

About the time that Lord Walsingham's carriage left the grounds belonging to Silvermere, Griselda Lyell was sitting alone in one of the small parlours of the London lodging-house where we first saw her. She was dressed in a gray travelling suit. A thick veil was fastened to her hat, so that, if need be, her face might be wholly concealed. It was thrown back, however, as she waited, in the embrasure of the window, the arrival of some one.

Griselda believed herself about to realise all her wild dreams of grandeur. With one decisive step she was to leave behind poverty and care, with a life of ill-paid toil, and enter upon a scene of wealth and luxurious ease; but yet her heart was not at rest. There was a something in the world she was leaving which her heart told her she might seek for in vain in the gayer one upon which she was about to thrust herself.

It was love!

The parlour door opened with a grating sound, and Griselda turned to meet the woeful face of little Toby.

"Oh, Miss Griselda, I s'pect they've come, 'cause there's a lady and gentleman in a carriage out there, and they told me to give you this bit of paper."

Toby came slowly forward, presenting a note to Griselda. She glanced it over and rose, saying, in a slightly tremulous voice:

"Yes, Sir Reuben Walsh and his sickly wife have come to take me abroad. London, with its wretched poverty, and I part company to-day for ever. Sir Reuben will live entirely on the Continent in future, and my situation as companion and nurse to Lady Walsh will be permanent. Living away, I shall soon be forgotten by the few—the very few—who have professed to care for me; I shall die and be buried at last, and those I love will never look upon my grave."

The boy crept close to Griselda, and when her empty words were said he threw his arms about her neck and cried:

"I won't never forget you, Miss Griselda; no, I won't; and it hurts me to have you think so. You're all I've got to love, and you've been kinder to me than any one else, and if you go off and leave me it'll most kill me; but I shall love you just the same 'cause I can't help it. Mr. Grafton will, too, though maybe you don't want him to. He's in the dining-room now, walking about, white as a ghost, and groaning awful, and talking to himself like as if he was crazy. Oh, I wish you wouldn't leave us—we both love you so."

The child's plump face was lifted with eager pleading to the radiant one bending wistfully over it.

With all her faults Griselda loved the little wail tenderly. He had grown to seem like a brother to

her. The plain parlour of the lodging-house had never seemed so attractive and home-like before. The love which was welling up from the very depths of the brave little heart, and the stronger, more manly love he had reminded her of, had never seemed so all-powerful, so redeeming as now, and Griselda walked the floor and wept bitterly, passionately, until her slender form shook with the violence of her emotions.

That was the death struggle of her old life, love, and feeling. Henceforth she must awaken to a new, but, alas! not a better life.

"Don't cry so, don't!" said Toby, his own cheeks wet with tears. "Let me go and tell the lady you won't go."

"No, no, Toby," said Griselda, desperately; "I cannot stay now if I would. It has gone too far. I have broken with Leonard, and I have promised them. I must—I must go!"

She was speaking now more to herself than to the child, and Toby, who, in his innocent heart began in a vague way to imagine that a quarrel with her lover was at the bottom of it all, rushed from the parlour and into that individual's presence.

He was walking yet, with dejected mien, and gave no heed to the boy's entrance.

"If you please, Mr. Grafton—please, Mr. Grafton—"

The young man was still not disposed to notice the child, and he came nearer and pulled the skirts of his coat.

"Mr. Grafton!"

For answer Mr. Grafton put out his knee and thrust the boy aside. The little fellow clenched his fist, and his lip quivered an instant with anger while he thought:

"If it wasn't for her I wouldn't tell him."

"Now, boy, tell me what you want."

"I don't want nothing," said Toby, defiantly. "But Miss Griselda, I s'pect she does. She's crying as if her heart would break, and she spoke your name, and said as how nobody would love her."

Leonard seized the boy roughly by the arm, and turned his face towards the light as though expecting to read a falsehood there.

"Are you sure you are telling the truth? Griselda Lyell wants me? She sent you to call me?"

"I didn't say all that, did I? Don't pinch my arm so, you hurt," and Toby tried to wrench himself away; "she wants you, and she's crying, that's all I said."

Leonard released him then, and strode out of the room.

Griselda was still weeping, though in a subdued manner, when the young man entered the room. The gloomy look disappeared from the moody face, and an expression of joyful expectancy took its place.

"You wished to see me, Griselda?"

"Yes," said she, scarcely thinking that she had expressed no such wish; "I am going now, I wish to say good-bye."

"Is that all? Are you going then, after all?"

"Certainly! Lady Walsh is waiting at the door. I must go, and that immediately."

She arose. Outwardly she had grown calm. Her face was emotionless as that of a statue. Her manner was at once dignified and easy. She held out her hand to say good-bye. Leonard took it, and placed it in his arm, holding it firmly.

"I will accompany you to the carriage. I must give Lady Walsh a charge concerning your health."

Griselda drew back, looking uneasy, and coloured.

"My good or bad health can be nothing to you, Mr. Grafton. It will be natural, I suppose, for me to take care of it."

"Nevertheless," he answered—and there was a ring of mockery in the words—"I must see this Lady Walsh and Sir Reuben. They may be old acquaintances of mine—who knows?"

Griselda darted an angry glance at her lover, but offered no further objection, and the pair walked through the narrow passage and out to the carriage together in silence. The young man threw open the door and looked in. It was plain to see that Sir Reuben was not numbered among the wealthy. The carriage was a hackney coach, its inmates were plainly dressed, and there was no footman or servant other than the coachman in attendance.

The features of Lady Walsh were completely concealed behind a thick veil, while a slouched hat and closely buttoned summer overcoat, with turned-up collar, rendered those of her companion invisible—all save a pair of small, steel-gray eyes, and these were but for an instant raised to the young man's face.

With a glance of keen scrutiny bestowed upon Sir Reuben and the veiled lady, Leonard stepped aside and took Griselda's hand to assist her to her seat beside Lady Walsh. Her hand was cold as marble.

Leonard bent over her and whispered:

"We part, Griselda, because it is your pleasure;

but you will remember what I have said to you in substance before: my love may turn to hate—then beware!"

He turned upon his heel and re-entered the house, and the carriage, with Randal Gabron and his mother laughing at the success of their little artifice, rolled away, bearing Griselda to her fate.

In less than an hour the trio were being whirled rapidly over the rails to Dover, where they took passage on board the "Princess Charlotte" for Calais.

Mrs. Gabron no longer hid her face behind her veil, and her small eyes glittered with an unwonted lustre, while a crafty smile played about her mouth. Randal also showed in his usually impassive face a spark of jubilant feeling. But Griselda, spite of the air of resolution which she maintained, started and paled at the sound of every approaching footstep, and her great, luminous eyes wandered nervously beneath the veil with which she persisted in hiding her face. There was no thought with her of relenting now. The idea of abandoning the wild scheme found no lodgment in her brain, yet she feared and trembled upon the verge of the plank which must be crossed before her steps could be planted in coveted Silvermere.

The three drew apart from their fellow-passengers on the deck, as if by common consent.

"Are you quite sure Lord Walsingham is not on board? I can but tremble every time a stranger looks this way," said Griselda, with a nervous shudder.

"Bless you, yes," returned Mrs. Gabron, while Randal crept nearer to his betrothed, and took her hand as though to inspire her with courage. "The earl was sound asleep at Silvermere when I left there. I know, because I made inquiries of his valet, under pretence of wishing to see him. How, then, could he reach Dover so soon? Besides, his lordship is going to cross over in the 'Peerless,' which does not leave till next night."

Griselda drew her hand from that of Randal with an impatient movement, and a dark frown gathered upon her finely arched brows.

The young man turned, leaned over the bulwarks, and gazed a long time at the water in moody silence.

Griselda's ungracious manner had given him a genuine fit of the "sulks," as his mother was wont to characterise his demonstrations of anger.

Randal Gabron never raged or stormed, as many are prone to do when aroused to anger. He was none the less dangerous in his moody, sullen wrath.

"Randal," said Mrs. Gabron, clutching him by the arm, "who is that woman in black, with the poke bonnet and umbrella? She's been watching us for the last half-hour."

"I don't care who she is," growled Randal, without turning his head.

"You'd better care, then, and find out what she's after."

Cautious Mrs. Gabron surveyed the black-draped figure from head to foot.

"Shall I go and ask her name, age, and destination, and all other particulars?" demanded Randal, gruffly.

Mrs. Gabron turned a questioning glance upon Griselda.

"The woman's form is familiar to me," said the latter, with a wary peep from under her veil, "but I have not been able to see her face."

"I saw it distinctly a moment ago. It is a face one would be likely to remember. Her eyes are hollow and jet black. The skin yellow and shrivelled, and there is a large black mole on the chin. She is no beauty now, though she may have been years ago."

Griselda was deeply agitated at this description of the stranger. She grasped the bulwarks for support, saying, as she kept her eyes fixed upon the mysterious woman:

"It must be her! It must be her! yet how can it be? Can she suspect our purpose? Does she recognise me?"

Mrs. Gabron and her son heard Griselda's words with apprehension.

The woman in black turned her face full upon the three, and, with an imperative gesture, beckoned Griselda to her side.

Randal muttered, and Mrs. Gabron fidgeted uneasily. Slowly, and with unwilling footsteps, the girl obeyed the woman's call. As she left her companions she faltered and seemed unable to proceed. Randal put out his hand to assist her, but she waved him back.

The black-robed figure paced the deck with the veiled Griselda on her arm for an hour, and until the steamer was nearing her wharf at Calais, while mother and son looked on with wonder and alarm. Together the walking pair conversed in low, guarded whispers. At length Griselda returned to her friends, and the stranger followed.

"Mrs. Gabron and Mr. Randal Gabron, allow me to present to you my mother, Mrs. Lyell."

"Your mother!" echoed both, in a breath.

"She knows all, and will help us to the best of her power."

The two women shook hands, and then Randal gave his to the mother of his betrothed.

"Yes, my daughter has told me everything, and it is well," said the new-comer, blandly: "all save the name of this proud nobleman who comes over the strait to meet his child."

Griselda leaned near to whisper, that no guanting fellow-passenger might catch the name:

"The Earl of Walsingham!"

Without uttering a word or a sound, Mrs. Lyell fell in a heap at her daughter's feet.

Randal lifted her in his strong arms and bore her apart, where she might not come under the gaze of the idle promenaders of the deck, and measures were immediately taken to restore consciousness. Griselda manifested no alarm at the state of her mother.

"Mother's nerves are weak at times, and any sudden excitement is likely to affect her in this way, though what there could be in the simple mention of a well-known nobleman's name to excite her is more than I can tell."

She assisted Mrs. Gabron in removing the outer clothing of her mother. The uncouth bonnet was taken off, and a mass of glossy black hair, untouched by a thread of silver, fell shimmering to the floor. The woman's features were regular, yet time and passion had each left its impress upon them. There was nothing prepossessing in the woman's face, though she was not positively ugly, and yet one who had known her in her younger days would have told you that she was then very beautiful.

The hollow eyes slowly opened at length, and fastened themselves upon Griselda.

"Girl!" she gasped as she rose to a sitting posture, "do you know what the gods are about to help you to do?"

She drew the wondering Griselda's face down to her own, and whispered something in her ear; it was but a word, but it had power to send her reeling from her mother's side, blanched to the dead-gray colour of a corpse.

She must have fainted but for the timely assistance of Randal, who caught her in his arms, and, detaching a bottle of smelling-salts from her girdle, he applied it to her nostrils.

When Mrs. Lyell was fully recovered from her faintness, and Griselda had regained her wonted calmness, the former fixed her great, cavernous eyes on her daughter's face and inquired:

"Well?"

"What you have just told me cannot change my purpose. It rather strengthens it," was Griselda's answer.

"It is well," replied her mother, her face aglow with fiendish exultation, half of joy, half of triumph. "Now—oh, now, after all these years of impatient waiting, I shall back in sweet revenge! Fate is bringing it to me in a way I never dared to dream of."

## CHAPTER V.

Thus far our fortune keeps an upward course,  
And we are graced with wreaths of victory.

3 Henry VI.

It was sunset in Calais. The "Princess Charlotte" had disbanded herself of her load of living freight, and was again steaming back to Dover.

The "Peerless" had not yet arrived.

Randal Gabron was standing idly before a fine-looking hotel, in which he had been told that English travellers of the upper class were wont to tarry.

A small, meek-faced lad, who, from his dress, Randal at once concluded belonged to the establishment, was enjoying the tricks of a huge mastiff before the principal door. Randal had considerable French at his command, and he addressed himself to interrogating the boy, finding but little difficulty in making himself understood.

"They don't exactly speak the truth when they tell me that this inferior house is where our English gentry delight to rest," he said, pompously.

The boy was indignant.

"Well, they do, then. Your nobility come and go every day—as there!"

"Ah!"

Randal uttered the exclamation in a conciliatory tone as he slipped a bright silver piece into the boy's hand.

"I suppose, now, there are none of that class here at present? I am looking for a friend, a certain Viscount Comberford. Can you tell me whether there is such a one here?"

"Young or old?" inquired the boy, with a consequential air.

"Young."

"Alone, or with a party?"

"Alone."

"Not here, sir, sorry to say. There are only the duke and duchess of—I forget what, with the beautiful young lady, an earl's daughter."

Randal caught at this, and interrupted the boy by asking:

"Are they in? The duke and duchess, and the earl's daughter?"

"Sorry to say they're gone. Went off in a carriage an hour ago."

Randal's countenance fell.

"Can you tell me where they went; or when they will return?"

"They took the Dunkirk road, sir, and I heard the coachman say he thought he would be back about ten o'clock."

"I think I met the party," said Randal, carelessly.

"The young lady was dressed in black, was she not?"

"Not a bit of it, sir. She had on a blue silk—a plain blue silk—and I don't believe our empress ever looked half so handsome."

Well satisfied with the information he had gained, Randal turned to go. When he had gone a few paces he returned to inquire concerning the equipage with which the little party was provided. He found that the carriage was of the sort known as a landau, that the horses were dappled gray, and that with the exception of the coachman there was no one in attendance.

The sullen face of this man lighted wondrously as he turned upon his heel and walked rapidly away. He traversed several streets, and at length paused in a dirty, obscure alley, and looked about as if in doubt. He then drew a dingy card from his pocket. He carefully deciphered the almost illegible characters traced in pencil upon the card, after which he resumed his walk. He stopped at length before a low wooden building in the outskirts of the town, and knocked for admittance. The door was cautiously opened by a frowny-headed old woman. After a series of questions and answers, during which the dirty card, as well as a note in the same handwriting, was handed to the woman and by her carried to some one within the house, Randal was suffered to enter.

At the expiration of perhaps a quarter of an hour he returned, followed as far as the tumble-down porch in front of the door by three entirely dissimilar but altogether evil-looking men. The foremost of these was nearly a giant in size. Neither of the three bore the appearance of being familiar with either razor or comb. Glancing cautiously up and down the sparsely inhabited street, the giant, rolling a huge quid of tobacco in his capacious mouth, exclaimed:

"It's all fair and square between us then, Mr. Camp." (This was the name Randal had given to the three brothers.) "We're to have all the grab, more or less, and you're to take nothing but the gal. Makes no difference to us, you know"—and the man's eyes leered on Randal with disgusting familiarity—"what you do with her after we've just lifted the shiners off her neck and arms. You can look her up in a convent, or marry her, or make her dad come down snug with a fortune for her ransom, or you can put her in the only safe place there is, where men and women tell no tales! Nothing to us, you see."

"Of course not," answered Randal; "but you must think of something besides the jewels. You must help me to get away with my part of the plunder. You understand you're to clear off as soon as the robbery has been effected, rush back upon the scene, from a different direction, and cry 'Thieves!' and 'Murder!' then you will listen to what I may say, and reiterate my words as coming from another person. When I came over I expected, with your help, to transact this little business at the hotel, but it is better as it is."

"Forty times better," replied one of the men. "We'll be on the spot. The Lorain Wood, near the haunted house, by dusk, sure."

His business with the "three brothers" concluded, Randal took his way to the small out-of-the-way inn where he had left his mother, with Griselda and Mrs. Lyell.

Lady Valeria Byerly, daughter of the Earl of Walsingham, sat in the comfortable carriage, beside the Duchess of Alloway, whose once beautiful, still fair and spiritual face was beaming tender glances of heartfelt sympathy upon her young and dearly loved charge.

Bright drops gathered in Lady Valeria's wondrous orbs as her thoughts went homeward, and the setting sun, sending his golden beams over the glowing cheeks, seemed to turn the maiden's tears to diamonds.

Lord Alloway occupied a seat opposite that of the duchess. He joined pleasantly in the conversation, now and then calling the attention of the ladies to some rich beauty in the landscape.

The top of the landau had been let down that they might the more fully enjoy the beauty and freshness of the scene through which they were passing.

The vehicle moved but slowly.

The air was deliciously cool and fragrant, and the



little party was in no haste to reach the hotel, especially as Lord Walsingham was not expected to arrive till late in the evening.

It was quite dark when they reached the confines of the wood, in the midst of which stood the deserted haunted house.

The duke was repeating a legend he had that day heard concerning its last tenants, when its sombre outlines, indistinctly revealed, in consequence of the giant trees which surrounded it, loomed up against the starlit sky.

His grace had reached that part of his narrative where a foul murder was committed when the horses' heads were roughly seized by a small body of armed desperadoes, while, quick as thought, one of the number, a giant-like fellow, sprang upon the coach-box, forcibly holding a sponge, saturated with chloroform, under the coachman's nose. Before he could rush to the man's assistance, the duke's own arms were being tightly pinned by one burly arm of the huge villain, while with the other the sponge, which had effectually silenced the coachman, was applied to his nostrils, and with a struggle the duke fell senseless upon his seat.

The swarthy giant now pressed swiftly forward to the side of the terrified duchess. With a piercing shriek, which rent the air, and was echoed from the walls of the haunted house, Lady Valeria fell down in a deathlike swoon. At the same moment the duchess fell under the influence of the potent drug. "Come on now, and be quick, boys; and you, Mr. Camp," cried the burly ruffian, and immediately the persons of the senseless victims were searched, and every article of value taken from them.

Randal Gabron came forward, trembling with eagerness and anxiety. Lady Valeria, still in a deep faint, was lifted by the giant and placed in the arms of Randal, who carried her to a distance of several rods, where his three female accomplices were waiting.

Depositing his burden upon the grass, eager hands were quickly at work tearing from the limp figure the rich mantle and the dainty hat.

Griselda Lyell quickly donned both articles, and then she bent eagerly over the quiet, upturned face, seeking to read by the faint starlight the resemblance which there existed to herself. The eyes were closed, as tightly shut as if they were never to open, the lips and cheeks looked ghastly as death in the feeble light, and Griselda turned away.

The highwaymen had finished their guilty work, and gone away towards Calais with their booty.

The inmates of the landau, with the exception of the pale, stern-eyed girl, who sat resolutely erect in the seat which the earl's daughter had so recently occupied, were yet in an unconscious state, when from the direction in rear of the carriage three horsemen came riding leisurely forward.

These were the robbers who had recently left the spot. They had mounted their horses, which had been concealed among the trees, and, galloping in the direction of Calais, had turned and made a circuit along a bridle-path through the wood to finish their part of the programme in a new character.

They halted opposite the vehicle, and in polite tones inquired if anything had gone wrong.

The girl who sat in the seat so lately occupied by the earl's daughter felt the pulses of the duke and duchess, and said:

"Come," she said, "I have long been waiting for you. Then Randal Gabron crept from the shadow of the trees, close to the side of the unconscious duke, and called loudly and excitedly to the horsemen, in deep, thrilling tones, which, had the coachman heard, he would have been ready to swear were the very accents of the Duke of Alloway:

"A murder has been committed. Lady Alloway, my wife, is the victim. We were set upon by robbers, and plundered of our money and jewels; but their hands did not do this awful deed. It was Lady Valeria, daughter of the Earl of Walsingham, who did it! Her hands are red with this terrible crime. I saw her, with my own eyes, plunge a glittering stiletto in the bosom of her friend. She was angry with her; and, in hopes that her guilt would be laid to the charge of the highwaymen, she dared to commit a murder! Gentlemen, she has fled; she saw that I was recovering my senses, and would witness against her! She is concealed somewhere in the wood! Let search be made for her at once! A thousand pounds to the man who captures her!"

The men bent up and down the road and in the glades for several minutes; then, putting spurs to their horses, they galloped away.

Randal Gabron glided like a shadow after them. At a distance of several rods from the carriage, his mother crept from the shadow of a tree, and the two strode down the starlit road together, conversing in low undertones.

"Should you have known, mother, but that the duke himself was talking when I denounced Lady

Valeria as a murderess? I declare I believe I might make a sensation on the stage."

"You're clever, my boy; I always knew that. But I can't exactly see why you have gone to so much pains—why you wish Lady Valeria to suppose herself accused of murder!"

"Listen, mother, and I will tell you. Lady Valeria must be removed from our path. You can see that?"

"Certainly, that is very plain."

"Well, here is our plan. She believes herself stigmatised as a murderess—pursued by the officers of the law—deserted by her friends—the Duke of Alloway her enemy. Mrs. Lyell will sympathise with her, will offer to protect her, and thus my aristocratic lady will be held a willing captive."

"Randal, you are worthy to become the husband of the heiress of Silvermere and Haldimand," replied Mrs. Gabron, clapping her son's great shoulders with playful approval. "But what if the earl's daughter—we will not call her Lady Valeria any longer—what if she, conscious as she must be of her innocence, should choose to come forward and brave her fate?"

Randal chuckled.

"That will be easily prevented. She is in the hands of one whose nature, if I mistake not, partakes of the cunning of the fox and the insatiable greed of the starving wolf. Our interests are safe while the mother of Griselda has them in keeping."

"But if not closely confined, the earl's daughter may discover your trick, if not its motive. She may learn that the Duchess of Alloway is alive. Better then that you had resorted wholly to force and a dungeon as I advised."

"Mrs. Lyell, I repeat, will see well to your master's daughter," Randal spoke, emphatically, and with sinister meaning. "She is not the woman, if I have read her aright, to long keep her daughter's position in peril; and, besides, Griselda's security, she seems to have an old grudge against Lord Walsingham to spur her on. Depend upon it, Griselda will soon stand the acknowledged heiress of Silvermere and Haldimand, with no fear of being dethroned. The dead are forever silent!"

Mrs. Gabron stopped walking as suddenly as though an arrow had plucked her. She seized her son's arm in a convulsive grasp.

"Randal, you don't mean to do that? Oh, you can never mean it! Answer me!"

"Tut, woman, I thought my mother was made of sterner stuff. The earl's daughter is in Mrs. Lyell's care. We are not responsible for what happens."

"But you can prevent that, and you must. I can never look my lord in the face again if the child he loves so well is—murdered. For the sake of my child whom I love I have consented to rob the earl of one equally dear to him, because I long to see you, my boy, rich and great. But I will not blacken my soul with murder, even for you."

With a few quieting remarks Randal succeeded in partially removing the fears his words had aroused, in the not yet callous breast of his mother; after which they walked on in silence to the desolate inn where neither Mrs. Lyell nor Griselda would meet them—Randal's mind occupied with sanguine thoughts, the woman's darkened by the shadow of the great crime which had been set in motion.

#### CHAPTER VI.

Now doth my project gather to a head. *Tempest.*

THE sound of the night birds, piping shrilly in their leafy coverts, mingled with the low, monotonous murmur of a brook near by broke soothingly upon the benumbed senses of Lady Alloway, as, recovering from the effect of the drug, she raised her head and gazed in a wondering, bewildered way from one to the other of her companions. She attempted to arise, but her trembling limbs refused to bear her weight.

"Valeria, you are here safe, and the duke, too. There is nothing the matter, after all. It was only a dream."

"You feel better now, dear Lady Alloway. Oh, I am so glad," said the soft voice of Griselda Lyell, the bold adventuress to whom we must now give the name of the beautiful, childlike girl whose place and rights she had usurped. "I am happy to know that you, at least, are recovering, though his grace and the coachman are still under the influence of chloroform or whatever drug those dreadful men used."

"Then it is, indeed, a reality! We have been attacked, by robbers, here, when so near home, after escaping the banditti of Italy and Greece!" said the duchess, slowly. "Yes, I remember it perfectly now. But how my head swims, and how pale you are! I can see even in this darkness that your face is white as marble."

"I fainted, I think, Lady Alloway, and so escaped being forced to inhale the drug which rendered you insensible. I have suffered great alarm about you, but I shall feel better soon."

At this moment both the duke and the coachman began to show signs of returning life.

The latter arose slowly from his seat and looked around in a dazed sort of way, murmuring:

"The haunted house! The Lorain Wood! Ah! I remember now—the robbers."

"Yes, the robbers!" echoed the duke; "have they made their escape?" and he leaned from the carriage and peered about in the darkness.

"Oh, yes, your grace!" said Lady Valeria, quickly, "they went off towards Calais several minutes ago."

"Were they on foot?"

"I am not sure," faltered she, "but I think they had horses."

"It is useless to attempt to overtake them, then. We can only lodge information with the police."

The coachman now seized his reins and the carriage was once more in motion.

Lord Alloway pressed his hand over his brow in perplexed thought. His gaze reverted frequently to the corner where sat Lady Valeria, as though it sought to pierce the darkness and read her face.

"It is very strange—incomprehensible," he murmured, in a tone of doubt.

"What is strange, my lord?" asked Lady Valeria, eagerly and anxiously.

"Do you know, Valeria, whether you were lifted from the carriage by those ruffians?"

"Don't tremble so, my dear," said the duchess, tenderly, for Lady Valeria's form was shaking as with an ague. "The men could have had no motive for such an unheard-of step. Besides, they would not dare. The duke was likely to recover at any moment. You must have been dreaming, Mortimer; Valeria surely was not taken from my side."

"My eyes were open," replied Lord Alloway, meditatively; "I was weak and helpless as an infant, yet for a while it seemed that my mind retained its faculties, and this is what I seemed to see: Valeria fainted, and was lifted by a man, the one in the carriage, and given into the arms of another, and then I thought I heard female voices. In a short time after that I saw, or thought I saw, Valeria come back, walking beside the man who carried her away. I saw him help her into her seat, and I can remember no more."

"Your singular fancy, Lord Alloway, must have been the effect of the poison you inhaled."

Lady Valeria spoke as though she felt confident of being believed. She had regained her composure, and during the time which elapsed before they reached the hotel, though not positively gay, she conversed in the liveliest manner, thereby seeking to convince the duke that what he had seen was but a phantasm of the brain, produced by the action of the poisonous drug.

She succeeded well. The duke allowed himself to be argued into believing a thing for which he could not account.

When the little party left the darkness of the carriage and entered the hotel, where the full glare of the gas fell upon them, the faces of each were seen to be unnaturally white, but that of Lady Valeria was positively pallid from fear, lest her features might not be able to pass the test of the noble couple's sight, as her voice had done their hearing.

The duchess led her charge up the broad marble stairs, and into a neatly furnished room, where the air was refreshingly cool, and laden with the perfume of flowers.

When her grace had left her to herself Lady Valeria gazed around the room with feverish eyes, a bright red spot glowing on each cheek. A rich robe of maize-coloured satin was lying across a chair; a pair of dainty shoes and a jewelled fan were keeping company near the dress.

"Where can Howard, the pink-faced lady's-maid who went abroad with her be? I am glad she is not here."

Lady Valeria locked the door with nervous fingers, and then she commenced exploring the room and adjoining bed-chamber, to assure herself that she was quite alone, after which she divested herself of every article of clothing which could lead to her identification with her former self.

At length she stood before the tall mirror arrayed, as she had never been before, in richest, costliest garb. She gazed at her reflected image with exultant pride.

She turned from the glass and paced the yielding carpet in pleasant mood.

"The worst—the hardest part is over," she mused. "The rest will be comparatively easy. I am now Lady Valeria Byerly—rich, beloved, envied. No longer Griselda Lyell, ex-governess, seamstress, etc. I am the daughter of an earl,—here her face flushed painfully—" soon to be acknowledged the child of one of England's proudest lords, henceforth to receive homage for my beauty and rank. Men who never knelt in love before will kneel now at the shrine of Lady Valeria, heiress of Silvermere and Haldimand."

The transformed lady paused before the door and unlocked it, after which she rang the bell for her maid. She leaned idly against the mantelpiece, her



[THE TRANSFORMED.]

white, unadorned hands toying idly with the flowers in the vase. Scarcely a minute had elapsed ere the girl came in. She stopped abruptly near the door, and gazed at her young mistress in consternation.

"What! my lady, dressed without help! Why did you not call me sooner? You know, however bad my head may feel, I am always glad to wait upon you."

The manner as well as the words of the lady's-maid showed that she had been treated more as a companion than a servant by her young mistress.

"So," thought Lady Valeria, "she has been having a headache."

"I needed no assistance, Howard. Will you bring me my jewel-case?"

"Which one, my lady?"

Lady Valeria coloured crimson with annoyance and anger. Why had she not known there were more than one? She turned to the window and looked out into the night.

"Will you wear your turquoise set, my lady?"

"Yes."

The gems were brought and clasped around neck and wrist.

"Well, Howard, what is it? One would think you were looking at a picture of death."

"My lady is beautiful as ever, but—"

The girl hesitated, regarding her mistress closely.

"But what, Howard?" asked Lady Valeria, uneasily, with paling lips.

"You look like another more than yourself, my lady. It must be your fright. I heard about those terrible highwaymen. Such a fright as you must have had is enough to change any one's eyes."

"Are my eyes so altered then?"

The dark, glowing orbs shot glances of anger and defiance at the shrinking lady's-maid.

"Pardon me, my lady," the girl spoke, humbly.

"they are just as handsome as before, but, somehow, they seem to have the look of a pair I met with once in London. The poor creature who owned them had been frightened, too."

Lady Valeria turned faint, and icy fingers seemed clutching at her heart. Was her mask to be torn away? So soon? even before her gaze had once feasted on coveted Silvermere! No, not if a resolute darling, a bold, unwavering purpose could keep her, as they had placed her, on a level with the noblest of the "daughters of Albion."

She took two or three turns across the room, her rich robe sweeping the carpet in a graceful train. She turned and faced the girl, her face still pale, but her voice calm and even-toned.

"Howard, you are a silly girl, and a bold one. If it were not that I consider your fancy too absurd to be noticed, I would ask you under what circumstances you met the person you speak of."

The girl was only too eager to tell.

"It will be five years next month, I was in town with Lady Walsingham. The girl who had eyes like yours had been knocked down by a runaway horse, and she was still lying on the pavement when I saw her. Her left temple, just under the hair, was cut open by her falling against a sharp stone. She was poor, for her clothes were cheap and old, but she moved and spoke like a lady, and made no ado at all over her hurt, which was in the shape of a cross. I remember thinking it was a good thing the scar would be covered by her hair."

Lady Valeria laughed, though there was little merriment in the hollow tones.

"And this girl whom you think had eyes like mine, what more do you know of her?"

"Nothing, my lady."

A rap was heard on the door, and a servant handed in a card—that of Lord Walsingham. The maid gave the card to her mistress, and wonderingly noted the effect it produced. Lady Valeria's bosom heaved with violent agitation which would not be suppressed; she trembled, she gasped for breath, and her large eyes had in their liquid depths a look of terror and wavering courage, as though her very soul shrank from the trying ordeal through which she must pass. She arose, thinking she must go immediately to the earl, but sat down again, shaking in every limb. Her maid, fearing she was about to faint, flung open the window to its fullest extent; then, picking up the fan, she drew near her strangely affected mistress.

"Go! Leave me at once!" cried Lady Valeria, sternly, imperiously. "I shall not want you again to-night."

"Yes, my lady," returned the maid, mildly, looking straight with her keen eyes into the white face of her lady.

Keeping her gaze thus fastened upon her, she glided out of the room, murmuring inaudibly as she went her way:

"What a sorry father his lordship will be to-night. My lady is surely in the same way as the countess. That encounter with the robbers has surely turned her head."

When the door had closed and Lady Valeria was again alone, she arose and walked up and down the apartment with nervous, irregular tread.

"How can I meet him calmly? The father of her in whose place I stand," she asked herself.

Then, as the secret her mother had whispered in her ears on board the steamer flashed across her mind, she pressed her hands, gleaming with the wronged one's jewels, to her throbbing temples, and by a mighty effort of her will, drove back the surging tide of weakness, irresolution, and uncertainty, and grew gradually calmer until her wonted manner was regained.

She bathed her face with the perfumed water which the careful Howard had prepared, and then said aloud:

"I will go now to meet him whom my mother hates with bitter hatred—whom I must love, at least with seeming, yet on whose face I have never looked."

She threw a scarlet India shawl over her graceful shoulders to give a shade of colour to her pallid cheeks, and sought the room where Lord Walsingham waited to embrace his daughter.

He was seated alone in one of the finest parlours of the hotel. His face wore a more cheerful, care-free look than it had ever put on at stately Silvermere.

Lady Valeria came in looking very much as a moving statue might. Her eyes, lips—in short, all the features of her classically beautiful face were emotionless as marble.

In a moment the earl's extended arms had clasped her to his breast, and the father's kisses were burning like living coal upon the false one's brow.

"How long the months have been since you went away, my pet!"

He loosened his clasp and held her at arms' length, that he might feast his eyes upon her wondrous beauty, and assure himself that the pining flower he had sent to gather freshness under the glowing sun of Italy had, indeed, profited by his self-sacrificing care. He looked with dismay at the icy whiteness and rigidity of his daughter's face.

"My poor darling, you are not well, and I cannot wonder that you are not, since your startling adventure in the Lorain Wood. There, don't tremble so, my child, I will not agitate you by speaking further of your unlucky drive."

He bent over her lovingly.

"Look up, Valeria, and tell me, have the months of your absence been in any way tedious?"

Lady Valeria raised her eyes, for the first time, full to the earl's face. He started, and changed colour as he met their cold, daring gaze—a gaze which instantly brought up from the buried past the dark orbs of one long since dead, as he believed, and till that moment long forgotten.

(To be continued.)





[AMY WATCHING THE QUEEN AND LEICESTER.]

## AMY ROBSART.

By BRACEBRIDGE HEMING.

Author of "Heart's Content," "Evander," &amp;c., &amp;c.

## CHAPTER XXV.

Ret. Paha! If you were a man, you would do as men do, child. Ha, ha, ha! They are creatures of robust constitutions, and will bear a great deal. Besides, for my part, I can't see what a reasonable fellow ought to expect before marriage but ill-usage. You can't imagine, my dear, how it sweetens kindness afterwards; for, take my word for't, there's no charm like cruelty to keep the men constant, nor no deformity like kindness to make them loathe you.

Now came the critical time which the Earl of Leicester had so dreaded. Whatever risk and danger there were he had brought upon himself by his crooked and tortuous policy. He almost wished in that hour of supreme anxiety that he had boldly avowed his marriage, instead of allowing his ambition to interfere with his happiness, for with so gentle, docile, and loving a being as Amy he knew that he could be happy.

How it wrung his proud spirit to reflect that his wife was regarded as the wife of Varney. What was Varney but a creature of adventure, an unscrupulous schemer? A breath had made him, and a breath could unmake. He knew that the countess disliked him, and he trembled as he thought of her virtuous indignation were she but to hear that her name was coupled with one who, in truth, was little better than a servitor, though deep in the confidence of his master.

The queen's critical eye had run over the faces of all the ladies in the great hall, and a frown settled on her brow as she found they were all familiar to her, but her features relaxed their somewhat grim tension as it occurred to her that Mistress Amy might be in waiting at a convenient distance from the royal presence.

Leicester stepped boldly forward, determined to meet the difficulty with as good a grace as might be, and his mind was tolerably easy as he reflected that he had entrusted everything to Varney, who was not wont to allow affairs of moment to be indifferently managed.

"May it please your grace," he said, with a slight tremulousness in his tone, which wore off as he proceeded, "the lady is not here. As this matter in some measure concerns myself, I have but now questioned my master of the horse, who informs me that the lady is ill—so ill, indeed, that she cannot with safety travel the distance between this castle and

Oxford. Varney brings certificates of an approved nature which attest the accuracy of my information, and sufficiently account for the lady's absence from your majesty's presence."

"The lady!" repeated the queen, quickly; "three times in a few moments, my lord, you have named her 'the lady.' She has a name, I believe, and why should she not enjoy whatever benefit her position may give her? If she is Master Varney's wife, why not let her bear the name which the law matrimonial confers upon her?"

Leicester had not been able to induce his rebellious mouth to pronounce the hateful name, but fearing to incur the displeasure of his imperious mistress he forced his mutinous spirit into a state of subjection, and was about to reply when Varney stepped forward, with a low bow, and said:

"If your majesty will pardon me, I will explain the cause of my wife's absence. The noble lord, my master, is scarcely informed of the facts in their entirety, as I have had barely time to have speech of him; the grand business of this glorious day has been so absorbing. I admit that your commands, madame, were most strict, but illness is not to be gained. Mistress Varney lies dangerously unwell at Cumnor Place, where she has been staying with one Anthony Foster, mine old friend, a strict Puritan, a man of substance, and one well accounted in the neighbourhood, from whom I have a letter which is countersigned by my Lord of Leicester's own physician, the well-known Alcazar, who has personally attended her by the kind permission of my lord."

At the same time as he spoke these words he fell on one knee and presented the certificates, which wore, as he had represented them, in the handwriting of Anthony Foster and Alcazar, setting forth, in appropriate language, that a sudden illness had attacked Mistress Varney, and that her intended journey to Kenilworth, for which she had prepared with great expectation, would endanger her life.

"This is regular and in order," remarked the queen, handing the paper to the Duchess of Rutland, who stood near her. "We regret the indisposition of your wife, Varney, because we intended to have had the matter of this alleged abduction from Devonshire strictly cleared up, in accordance with the prayer of Tresillian's petition, for he considers himself aggrieved—as what fillet man does not? However, such being the case, we cannot interfere at present, though, rest assured, our memory is sufficiently good to induce us at a future time to investigate the case with as much strict severity as we would now were the lady before us. 'Tis clear she cannot be in two places at once, but we consider the matter adjourned

until Mistress Varney's health will permit her to come before us."

"I trust you are perfectly satisfied with my conduct and good faith in this matter?" said the Earl of Leicester.

"Perfectly," answered the queen, with a smile.

Tresillian, who had listened attentively to the conversation, was stupefied at what he heard. There was some terrible mystery in it all. Could they be aware that Amy was in reality in the castle? At all events the certificates were false.

Urged by an irresistible impulse, he advanced towards the throne, but stopped ere he had made more than half a dozen paces, as his promise to Amy came into his mind. He could not speak to that which he knew; his tongue was tied for four-and-twenty hours.

He had, however, brought himself into prominence: The queen saw and recognised him. It was too late to retreat, and, covered with confusion, he stood still.

"Ha, Tresillian!" cried Elizabeth. "You have heard what this gentleman"—pointing to Varney—"has said. Much as we regret Mistress Varney's absence, we can do nothing for you. Another time we hope the fates will be more propitious."

Tresillian bowed, and, making one or two vain attempts to speak, retired.

"This same love," said the queen to those near her, "must be an extraordinary passion. Look how wild and haggard this poor man seems. He is like one distraught; the very negligence of his attire denotes a mind ill at ease."

Being in a gracious humour, and wishing to mark her visit to Kenilworth by some act of favour, she intimated her desire to confer the honour of knighthood upon one follower of the Earl of Leicester and one of the Earl of Sussex, and asked them to designate those who should be the lucky recipients of her favour.

Leicester named Varney, and Sussex pointed out Raleigh, who he knew already stood high in her majesty's favour.

The choice was an agreeable one, and bidding them kneel, she took a sword and confirmed them in their new rank, much to the delight of both, who at once became objects of envy and interest to all the courtiers.

After this ceremony was brought to a conclusion the party proceeded to the banqueting-chamber, where the festivities of the evening went on with unabated ardour. The splendour and magnificence which were apparent on all sides were very gratifying to Elizabeth, who revelled in grandeur and display,

which flattered her vanity, and convinced her that her reign was one of exceptional excellence.

Meanwhile, those whose rank did not admit them into the royal presence were making equally merry in other parts of the castle. Dick Whistler gave himself up to the spirit of the hour, and, forgetting aught else but jollification, drank and drank again the health of the queen and the Earl of Leicester until reason nearly tottered on her throne.

The heat induced him and several others, after dining, to sit out in one of the courts of the castle, where the events of the day were talked over. Barfoot happened to come by, and, being instantly espied by Whistler, became the butt of his ridicule.

"There goes one of the Earl of Sussex's loons!" he cried. "We have a score to settle, and we'll settle it now. What say you, my merry men, to toss him in a blanket? Cogswot! 'twould be a noble pastime, and a fit revenge for what I had to put up with at his hands."

Barfoot tried to make his escape, but he was quickly seized by a dozen willing hands, Dick being foremost in the outrage. Most of the party were more or less drunk, and cared little for the consequences of their conduct. As for Barfoot, he was sober enough, having been hunting in every conceivable place for the letter which Amy had entrusted to his care for delivery to the Earl of Leicester. Nowhere could he find it, and he was wandering disconsolately about when his evil fortune brought him in contact with his enemy.

Half a dozen torches were quickly lighted, and a stout blanket procured, two men grasping each corner. Barfoot was cast in, and the sport began. His cries were fruitless, and only met with roars of derision. Every time the blanket was jerked upwards he went higher and higher. Dick stood by, his hands on his hips, laughing loudly.

"Up with him," he exclaimed. "You make fine play, my lads. It is a question whether it be not worse to be tossed in a blanket than to be stuck fast in a quickest hedge. Bestrew me, but his yells are like music in my ears. Fear him not, fear him not. He is as well known among the horse-dealers in Smithfield as St. Paul's is to a Londoner. What? Shall he gird at me and throw me into a prickly hedge and I not have my revenge? I can feel the thorns now in my fleshy parts. Up with him, brave boys, up with him, I say, until he can smell the smoke from the chimneys!"

His instructions were followed so well that the unfortunate Barfoot bounded up in the air like an india-rubber ball when it touches the ground, and as if there was no peace for the wicked, he had no sooner fallen, breathless and dizzy, into the blanket than up he went again, his arms and legs thrown out in such a comical manner that it was impossible to refrain from laughing at him.

At length he fell rather near a corner, and the holders being somewhat fatigued, and having a slight hold, allowed it to give way, which permitted their victim to roll out on the stones, where he lay, partly insensible, bleeding from the mouth and nose. Instantly a dozen willing hands lifted him up, some spirit was forced down his throat, and he was set upon a bench with his back against the wall. Soon he began to recover, and when he was able to walk he rose, shaking his fist at Dick Whistler, and vowed that he would not forget this malicious trick of his inventive genius.

"Good faith!" said Whistler, proffering him a cup of claret, "I bear you no ill-will now, man; we are equal. You played me one scurvy trick, I have played you another. I'd as lief been in jail as in the limbo of that blanket. We are quits. Drink, man, and drown care."

But Barfoot was angry, and, with another assurance of implacable enmity, he reeled like a drunken man from the place.

"Your same blanket-tossing is a fine curer of the spleen," said Dick Whistler, laughing, "but it must have its time to work. 'Tis a'most as bad as the strappado. I have seen the kernes put to that rack in Ireland, and they would swear anything."

Barfoot had not gone far before he met Tresillian and Sir Walter Raleigh, as we must now call him. They had left the banqueting-hall for a time, and were conversing eagerly together.

"I tell you," said Tresillian, "that the certificates are false, though I am not at liberty to disclose my source of information. If I were, my Lord of Leicester and his minion Varney would not sing so loudly, I'll warrant me."

"But, my dear Tresillian," answered Raleigh, "if there is any plot in this, why allow it to prosper? I confess that I am rather in a fog about this matter of Mistress Robart. What she could see to prefer in such a fellow as Varney to you I cannot imagine. You have the advantage of him in speech, bearing, birth, and scholarly attainments. She must be purblind or fatuous."

"I know not," answered Tresillian, gloomily, "it passeth my comprehension entirely. She—but I crave your pardon for a moment, Raleigh. Here is a man I would fain speak with."

Tresillian had seen Barfoot slinking along in the shadow of a wall as if he would avoid him, and he called him by name, which was a summons he did not think fit to disregard, though he was in a sorry plight to meet his master, and had no satisfactory information to give him if questioned.

"For shame!" cried Tresillian, mistaking the cause of the disorder of his attire and his uncertain, swaggering gait. "This is a time to be merry, but you should not forget yourself, man, when important issues are confided to your care."

"I have been ill-treated, sir, by one Dick Whistler, a roysterer, in the service of Master Varney, whom they tell me has been knighted by the queen. He and his drunken companions have tossed me in a blanket for what I did at your command. I hindered him in the pursuit of the lady whom—"

"Hush! we must not speak above our breaths of that matter," interrupted Tresillian, fearing lest Raleigh should be within earshot. "I will make complaint and have the miscreant punished. This treatment is a slight upon me and my Lord of Sussex. But tell me quickly, have you found the letter?"

"I have, sir," rejoined Barfoot, whose wits were too bewildered to invent a ready excuse, and thinking a lie would serve his purpose better than the truth.

"Where is it?" demanded Tresillian, eagerly. "I have given it to him to whom it was addressed but an hour ago, before he went to the banqueting-room."

"I am glad of that," said Tresillian. "You have done well. I trust the miscreant may have the desired effect. Go, get you to bed. We must have no brawling here, but I will see that this outrage of which you complain is redressed. Go, and let me see you in the early morning."

Barfoot bowed and retired, glad to escape so easily from the embarrassing encounter.

"I wish," he muttered, with a lugubrious air, "that I was well out of this scrape. It is dangerous playing with fire. I am not made for the intrigues of great people, and, I fear me, I shall suffer for this before I see the end of it."

When Tresillian rejoined Raleigh he said, gleefully:

"Great events will happen before long, Walter, or shall I give you your new title? Perhaps it will sound like pleasant music in your ears."

"Nay, I am not such a coxcomb as that," answered Raleigh. "It is but prized by me as a mark of court favour. I hold it as a means to an end. Being poor and ambitious, anything is agreeable which will help me to rise."

"Is not that Varney who came out of the door of that tower?" asked Tresillian, pointing to a cloaked figure which just then made its appearance.

"Tis he, or I am much mistaken. Mark how he walks with the strut of a game-cock. The new honours which blush thick upon him he carries not with becoming meekness. But 'tis ever so. 'Set a beggar on horse-back, and he will ride to the devil,'" rejoined the new knight.

"I must have speech of him."

"Be it so. Remember that you can have half my chamber if you are sure, as you have been informed, that the one appointed for you is occupied."

"Many thanks, Walter. I hold you my friend in my misfortunes, and shall not hesitate to avail myself of your offer should it be necessary, as I imagine it will be," Tresillian said, running after the cloaked figure.

"I hope he is not mad enough to provoke a riot," said Raleigh to himself. "However, I shall not risk my favour at court by mixing myself up in his quarrel. That, forsooth, would be a fool's business."

The shrewd young gentleman re-entered the castle and joined the court party, who were talking merrily preparatory to separating for the night, the queen having exhibited some symptoms of weariness, which was not to be wondered at, the day having been a most trying and fatiguing one.

#### CHAPTER XXVI.

That sweet relief, the healing hand of Heaven  
Alone to suffering innocence has given;  
Come, friend of virtue, balm of every care,  
Dwell in my bosom, and forbid despair.

"SIR RICHARD VARNEY, if I am not mistaken," exclaimed Tresillian, when he had overtaken the person of whom he was in pursuit.

"At your service, sir," answered Varney, coldly. "You know me, and I wish to make a few remarks which—"

"Tresillian!" said Varney to himself, the darkness having prevented him from recognizing his enemy

before. Then adding aloud: "I cry you pardon. I knew you not—not for the moment. I was at fault. What would you with me, Master Tresillian?"

"I ask you what object you had in displaying before her majesty certificates which you, as well as I, know to be false? The daughter of Sir Hugh Robart is not at Cumnor, nor is she ill!"

Varney started.

"Are you fully aware of what you are saying?" he answered. "You impeach the honour of the Earl of Leicester, and call in question the sworn testimony of gentlemen who are in his confidence!"

"I believe the Earl of Leicester to be an honourable man, but he is your dupe, Varney. Why is this lady persecuted by you? Why not let the truth be avowed, whatever it may be? The queen has expressed a wish to see her. You must have some deep design in keeping her from the royal presence."

"I will hold no discourse with you, Master Tresillian," said Varney. "It is evident that your fancied wrongs have turned your head, and that you are not answerable for your words. If you are in possession of any great secret, why do you not make use of it to my disadvantage?"

"Because I cannot at present. The time is not come. Wait, wait. If I am not mistaken, both you and Leicester will be overwhelmed in one common ruin. I have sought you to beseech you at the last moment to be wise; cease your persecution, adopt an open policy."

"Enough of this!" cried Varney. "I have compassion for your troubles, sir, but I cannot allow myself to be affronted in this manner. Mistress Robart is now Mistress Varney. She is my wife, and I alone am answerable for her treatment."

"Then you are a villain! I have no hesitation in saying so, and you have some peculiar purpose in refusing to give her audience of Elizabeth. Do you hear me, Sir Richard Varney? You are a villain!"

For a moment Varney's hand sought his sword, but his prudence restrained him. He saw that Tresillian had some purpose in provoking him into a quarrel, and his sense told him that he had nothing to gain by an unmanly brawl in his patron's castle; so he replied, with an assumed mildness:

"You shall insult me now at your pleasure. Another time we shall doubtless have a fitting opportunity of settling the little score which exists between us, and which you have this night run up."

"Contemptible hound!" exclaimed Tresillian, who would have done him some violence had he not slipped quickly away, and disappeared through an open door which happened to be within a few yards of him.

Tresillian had made an effort, such as it was, in Amy's behalf, but he was not at liberty to act fully, and, his hands being so tied, he could do her no real good until the time had expired for which she had stipulated. Not feeling in the humour for joining in the festivities, which were drawing to a close, he retired to Sir Walter Raleigh's apartments, and, selecting a couch in a retired corner, threw himself down, all dressed as he was, and courted sleep, which proved herself a shy lover. For a long time she coquetted around his eyelids, and when at last she condescended to settle upon them he was worn out with watching for her approach.

The Earl of Leicester was also glad when Elizabeth signified her wish to retire, and he was liberated from his arduous duties. Soon all was quiet and still. No sound was heard except the baying of hounds in the kennels, who were disturbed by the grooms and prickers making preparations for a grand hunt on the morrow. The yeomen of the guard performed the duties of the watch whenever the queen was present in person, and their voices were heard occasionally in the spacious courts and quadrangles of the castle. It was a lovely night. The sky was studded with stars, amidst which the moon shone out like a superior luminary.

Everything in the earl's chamber denoted the taste of a Sybarite. The furniture was not only costly, but voluptuous. His eyes rested on the splendid hangings as if he enjoyed their beauty. His taste showed itself in the admiring way in which he leaned over a vase of sweet-smelling flowers and stayed to inhale their fragrance. Again his love, we may almost say his necessity, for the beautiful betrayed itself in the act of producing and gazing at a miniature portrait of Amy—his countess, the unhappy lady upon whom he had brought so much trouble, though he was unconscious how much she suffered.

Outside his window there was a small balustrade, from which was obtainable an extensive view of the chase, bathed in a flood of argent moonlight.

As he stepped out he felt a glow of pride when he reflected that he was the owner of this wide domain and the founder of the festivities which had for their entertainment the sovereign of the realm.

But his heart throbbled more quickly when he wondered how long he would be able to maintain his lofty eminence. At any moment some untoward oc-



current might chance to hurl him to the bottom of fortune's ladder. He wished that Alcazar were within call, that he might consult him respecting the aspect of the heavenly bodies, for the night seemed favourable for such a consultation.

A slight noise in the room disturbed him, and, turning round, he saw Varney. A smile instantly illuminated his handsome features, and, extending his hand, he exclaimed:

"Let me congratulate you, Sir Richard, upon your elevation to knightly rank. No one better deserved such a return for services rendered."

"Let me thank you, my lord, for your kind interposition in my favour," answered Varney, humbly. "I know to whom I owe my rank, and, believe me, I am grateful for this last mark of your favour."

The earl laid down the orders with which his breast glittered, and Varney gathered them into a jewel-case—first, the English Garter and the diamond George, the jewel of the order; next, the order of the Golden Fleece, conferred upon him by the King of Spain; then the order of St. Andrew, which had been revived by the last James of Scotland. When all were placed in security the earl said:

"This is scarcely consistent with your dignity, Sir Richard."

"Oh, my lord!" answered Varney, "to you I am the same humble servant that I have always been; to the world I shall appear a little bigger, but I beg that you will not banish me from your person because your influence has made the son of the queen's favour to shine upon me."

"Thou art a good fellow, Varney. I have not planned my faith on a leaf to be shaken by the wind of either prosperity or adversity; in you I can repose confidence. Now, while I take off this gay apparel, tell me what news there may be to be related."

Varney did not dare to relate the story of Amy's escape from Cumnor, for he knew that the narration would throw the earl into a state of profound perturbation, and perhaps unfit him for the performance of his duties on the morrow. It was, in his opinion, one of those facts best kept concealed under existing circumstances. He had a half-formed plan in his head of sending Dick Whistler after her on the following morning; a recapture was possible. But at present he scarcely knew what to do for the best; he was apprehensive of no present danger, and all he thought of was to tell the earl his master into a sense of security, whatever might happen afterwards.

"I have only heard a general expression of opinion in your favour, my lord," answered Varney. "Men say that your hospitality is right royal, and, saving your presence, I have listened to some who under their breath look forward to the time when you will sit on the throne of this fair country."

Leicester's countenance lighted up, but the pleasurable emotion soon faded away.

"It were a high destiny," he said, "but I need not tell you that it cannot be. You, who are in my confidence, know very well that I am married. A man cannot have two wives. Even now I tremble when I think of the consequences which might follow a discovery of the policy I have pursued in this matter. My head might be brought to the block."

Varney laughed scornfully.

"You are too high and mighty for that, my lord," he exclaimed, "your kinship too numerous and powerful. Besides, in this free England no man's head can fall without law."

"I have many enemies, Varney," sighed the earl. "The inevitable result of being great is that one's rise brings one unmerited enmity; and if my royal mistress wished it, she has enough of the spirit of her father, the bloody King Henry, to devise some means of securing me of treason. An accusation is easily made, and judges are too prone to listen to trumped-up evidence."

"I wish, my lord, that we had never made that fatal journey into Devonshire. You would not then have been trapped by the beauty of Mistress Amy."

"It is too late for regrets; and my love for the girl is so great that I cannot wish the past recalled."

"But why not make some secret bow for this 'Rosemond'?" said Varney. "You can love her, my lord, and keep her close. Suppose no one is any wiser than at present, you would be free to play a high game, and if, as I think, the queen looks upon you with favour, now is the time to urge your suit."

"There is a chance. I will not disguise that either from you or myself," Leicester answered, musingly. "Her majesty's manner grows more gracious day by day. Yet I fear some terrible explosion. I know not why, but I have a presentiment of coming evil. These intuitions, as I may call them, rarely deceive me."

"You have been overtaxed to-day, my lord; 'tis a weakness of the nerves and will pass with sleep."

Varney hastened to suggest. "If you will be brave, and rise equal to the occasion, daring all, soaring like

the eagle, you will achieve your destiny! What says the voice of the stars? Alcazar made a prediction, and he is a man in whose skill I would place implicit trust. He even foretold the dignity I have received to-night."

"Did he?" exclaimed the earl, much interested. "If I could believe that I were destined to be Elizabeth's consort! Why not? Her sister Mary gave her hand to Philip of Spain. Why should Elizabeth be averse to matrimony? You fill my mind with strange thoughts, Varney. I will to bed and reflect as I may upon my future course. What news have you from Cumnor?"

"The best, my lord," answered Varney, uneasily. "What would you say if this indisposition of the countess deepened?—if—if 'twere a serious malady, which were to have a fatal ending?"

"No more of that!" cried Leicester, impetuously. "I cannot and will not listen to such suggestions! Life must not be tampered with. I will have no wrong done—no, not even to sit on the throne of such a country as England!"

"I did but jest, my lord," Varney exclaimed, quickly changing his tone. "The lady is in no danger, and feels no uneasiness save a desire for your company."

"Poor Amy," the earl said as Varney assisted him to his couch, "I have indeed caused you to travel a path which is not exactly one of roses; but I am a child of fate, and must go whither my destiny hurries me."

That was the mood in which Varney wished to get him, and, with a wish that his rest might be undisturbed, he left him to indulge fresh dreams of ambition and wonder when the ball, now that it was set rolling, would stop.

He already saw his patron king, and himself a minister of state, loaded with wealth and honours.

"What," said he to himself, "shall I allow the life of a pretty girl to stand between me and the realisation of such a vision? Were there twenty girls in the way they should all fall! Leicester shall be no wiser. The death may shock him, but the first pang over he will consider her an obstacle removed from his path, and thank fate for ridding him of such an encumbrance. I will be stirring with the dawn to-morrow. Whistler shall go in pursuit of the wayward girl. I will bribe him heavily to use despatch and bring her back to Cumnor. She cannot be difficult to find, and once more under the care of Anthony Foster her hours are numbered."

With this awful threat on his lips he sought his chamber and, such was the callousness of the man's mind, quickly fell asleep, though his slumber was not undisturbed. He tossed restlessly about, babbling wildly, and sometimes cried out loudly; his thoughts were active, while his body lay unconscious.

#### CHAPTER XXVII.

Sir C.: Make yourself a little intelligible, sir.  
Fed.: And so I don't speak plain, eh? Oh! the little rogue! There's more beauty in the veins of her neck than in a landscape of Claude, and more music in the smack of her lips than in all Handel.

DURING the period of this eventful day which was passed by Amy in the castle she was the prey of a restless anxiety. Every moment she expected to see the Earl of Leicester, or, at least, some messenger from her husband, for she did not dream for a moment that her letter had miscarried.

The unhappy girl was entirely at a loss to account for his protracted silence, and could only explain it on the ground that he was so much occupied with the duties which devolved upon him as host that he could not spare half an hour even for her.

"When all is still," she said, "he will come to me; and I will be so loving and obedient that I will do anything he tells me. I would not embarrass him for the world, and he shall not have cause to address one word of reproach to me."

She heard the hoarse shouts of the multitude, the discharge of the cannon, the braying of the trumpets, and the clash of the music discoursed by the numerous bands. She beheld the splendid display of fireworks, and her childish mind was pleased with the pyrotechnic devices, which were entirely new to her, and seemed like magic.

It was a relief when night fell, and but few sounds disturbed the air. A party of roysterers in a corner of the court kept up a din till twelve o'clock, but at last their drunken voices, too, were hushed.

Yet she could not sleep, for she expected to hear the welcome footsteps of her lord on the stairs, and to be clasped in his manly embrace as of old.

"He will come! Oh, I know he will come to me!" she murmured.

There were two others besides herself who could not sleep that night—one was Treillian, the other Dick Whistler. The former awoke from a broken slumber to find that Sir Walter Raleigh, whose

chamber he shared, had retired, and was sound asleep. Rising, he arranged his garments, and, descending, made his way to Mervyn's Tower—walking up and down before it, and wondering if Amy was still in her apartments, and if she had been successful in the plan which—from the fact of her despatching a letter to Leicester—he fancied she had formed.

While thus engaged he saw Dick Whistler come into the court with unsteady gait, and make in as straight a line as he could pursue for the doorway of Mervyn's Tower.

Hastily concealing himself in the shadow of the door, Treillian heard him mutter to himself:

"I'll unearth this petticoat, and question her as to her coming here. There is some secret attached to it, I'll warrant me, and secrets at times put money in one's purse. I have had the scheme in my thoughts all the evening, and should have gone before had not the plaguy wine got into my head so as to muddle it. By the Mass! I shall soon become so much like a butt that they may tap me and find claret!"

Thinking the instinct that prompted him to come and watch over his lost love, Treillian stood close, feeling sure that Whistler's words alluded to Amy. For a moment he did not know what to do, and, after a little reflection, he determined to wait, and be guided by the course of events.

It seemed probable that the fellow—prompted by cupidity and curiosity—intended to inflict his hateful presence upon Amy; to stop him at once and inflict condign punishment upon him would compromise the countess, and be apparently unjust to the intruder, who had, as yet, done nothing to merit chastisement. If he were caught in the act of annoyance, Treillian felt that he should be justified in raising a hue and cry, which might ultimately assist Amy in spite of herself.

It seemed to him decidedly for her interest—after what had taken place before the queen—that her presence in the castle should be widely known; though by no word of his would he break his promise to her.

The conduct of Whistler, however, might enable him to cry for help, and so bring people into her chamber, and force her to declare herself, and implore assistance.

With a beating heart he continued to wait. Amy's expectancy made her hearing unusually acute, and when the sound of Dick Whistler ascending the staircase fell upon her ears she concluded that the earl was her midnight visitor, and, opening the door to receive him, exclaimed, as she held out her arms:

"At last, darling, at last!"

"Well, I didn't know I was expected, but it's all the better!" replied Dick, allowing her arms to encircle his neck.

The embrace was of momentary duration only, for, with a shriek of disappointment and dismay, Amy retreated to a corner of the room, and gazed in a terrified manner at Whistler, who was plainly visible as he stood in the moonbeams which played upon his tall figure.

Though she had seen him once or twice at Cumnor he had made no impression upon her memory, and she did not recollect him in the least.

"Who are you?" she asked; "and how dare you intrude upon me in this privacy? Are you not afraid of being punished, or have you come here by mistake? If so, I beg you to retire at once, as you must see that you have no business here."

"My business, pretty one, is with you," replied Whistler. "Tell me your name, and all about yourself. Give me one kiss—nay, two or three, I'll not be satisfied with one; and I'll lay my rank and fortune at your feet."

"Oh! go away, I implore you!" cried Amy, now thoroughly alarmed. "If you are a gentleman, leave me—you know not what you do! Heaven help me!" she added. "He is disguised with wine."

Dick's only response was to advance towards her, boldly, his arms extended, saying:

"One kiss, if I die for it."

He happened, however, to stumble over a chair, and this enabled Amy to rush past him, crying:

"Help! help!"

In a moment Treillian was in the room. He knew her voice too well to hesitate a moment, and rushed to her rescue. Amy was like a startled fawn. The presence of a second man, whose features she could not see for the darkness, instead of reassuring her, alarmed her still more, and she fled down the stairs, into the court, and through an open wicket into the garden, which she thought offered a more secure retreat than any other part of the castle.

Dick Whistler had by this time recovered himself, and, looking at Treillian, exclaimed:

"Who have we here? This becomes serious. Shall I not keep an appointment with a lady without having spies put upon me?"

"Liar and villain!" cried Tresillian. "I speak within bounds, for I know you to be both. The lady did not wish for your company, and you were an impudent intruder."

"Oh! is it so? Perhaps you are the party she expected; for that she did await some one I'll swear, or she would not have thrown her lovely arms round my neck. There are nice goings-on in my Lord of Leicester's castle. Let us have lights to examine your countenance withal; or, failing that, you'll have to stand in the moonlight, that I may identify you, else I'll know the reason why. This savours of immorality, and cannot be permitted, sir gallant," said Whistler, impudently.

"A truce to thy balderdash," exclaimed Tresillian, "you know me very well, or ought to. My name is Tresillian, and you are the madcap attendant upon Sir Richard Varney—to give him the title his villainy has brought him."

"Now, by this hit! no one shall abuse my master," cried Dick Whistler. "And, seeing that you are in my power through this discovery, Master Tresillian, it behoves you to chant a little less loudly. But, cogawounds! where is the lady?"

"Methought something passed me on the stairs," ejaculated Tresillian.

"I would to Heaven my head was not so light and my brain so muddy. It is usually an exceeding fertile brain, and has done me good service in my lifetime. I water it, I manure it as it likes with good liquor, and it bringeth forth tenfold; but at times it rusteth, I cannot tell why. Had I not been muddled she should not have 'scaped thus."

"You are an insolent varlet," said Tresillian, "and must leave this room. There is gold for thee; take it, and consider yourself paid."

"For what?—for silence?" cried Dick. "No, I'll go hang first. There shall be inquiring and laughter at your expense, Master Tresillian, to-morrow. But I'll take the gold, I like the chink of the yellow-boys."

"Either depart of your own free will or go at the point of my sword, you rascally knave!" exclaimed Tresillian, drawing, for he was growing choleric.

"Am I to be mocked by grooms?"

"Groom in your teeth!" answered Dick, who was just drunk enough to be valorous.

But before he could place himself in defence the sharp prick of Tresillian's sword drove him to the door and through the doorway to the head of the stairs, down which he pitched headlong, lying at the bottom stunned and bleeding.

Tresillian now searched the room carefully, and, finding no trace of Amy, went down the staircase and looked over the court. At length he concluded that she had either found some asylum or temporarily hidden herself and would return. He lingered in the court, pacing up and down impatiently, until daylight appeared, and the inmates of the castle began to move about; then he went back to Raleigh's apartments, and, thoroughly worn out, slept.

As for Dick Whistler, he lay like a log where he had fallen, overcome by the drink he had taken and the hurts he received in tumbling down the crooked staircase, which made his bones ache all the next day, though he was not seriously injured.

The night was by no means cold, and Amy was not inconvenienced by the weather; in fact the air was rather agreeable than otherwise, for it fanned her hot and feverish cheek as she wandered through the parterre full of flowers, and amidst the quaintly out shrubs, it being the custom to fashion yaws and boxes into the similitude of birds and animals.

She was clad in a brown silk dress, and had left her cloak and hood in the tower when she so precipitately sought safety in flight. Her face was a little haggard, and her hair had escaped its fastenings.

"What a strange guise for Leicester's countess!" she said, half aloud. "How have I entered my husband's castle! how been received! But I have one comfort, he does not know it. I came here of my own free will. It is not by Dudley's orders or consent I am in this plight."

To return to Mervyn's Tower was to her such a repugnant course that she determined on no account to adopt it. It seemed far more advisable to her to remain in the pleasure and try to enlist some lady of the court in her behalf, as she stood a chance of meeting some one in the morning.

A grotto built of the spar found in Derbyshire invited her to enter. She found seats inside, and sank down upon one, which, though not very comfortable, was nevertheless a seasonable resting-place.

She could not sleep, though her head fell back and her eyes closed. The slightest sound made by the wind, the cry of a peacock, the movement of a bough, was sufficient to cause her to start up and look wildly about her.

The night passed and dawn came; with the morning, too, came hope. She began to think that her sufferings were nearly over, for it could not be long

first before she would be discovered by some one through whom she could make her presence known to the earl.

Perhaps, she thought, the letter has not reached its destination; or, if it had, the earl, preoccupied, had cast it on one side to read it at his leisure; or it might have fallen into Varney's hands, who, being her enemy—as she always argued—had purposely kept it from him to whom it was addressed.

At an early hour, while still enshroued in the grotto, Amy heard footsteps and voices approaching her.

A small hole in the wall, which was intended to admit light, enabled her to look out and behold the long vista of walks, flower-beds, terraces, and flights of steps which led up to the castle.

These had little interest for her; she had recognised one of the voices, whose tones thrilled through her very heart. It was that of the Earl of Leicester, and with him was a lady, evidently of high rank, for several ladies in attendance upon her remained some distance in the rear, in a respectful attitude.

"It must be the queen, and with Dudley," murmured Amy, her heart palpitating violently.

She was right. It was indeed Elizabeth, who had accepted the earl's escort to walk through the beautiful grounds before they set out for the chase. Her majesty was dressed in hunting costume, which well became her imperious and slightly masculine form. Leicester was attired in Lincoln green, with all the appurtenances of a huntsman.

His manner was full of tenderness. Amy remembered how he had often bent over her with the same soft and gentle air, and how his expressive eyes had sought to read her soul. A pang of jealousy shot through her heart. Could it be possible that she had a rival, and that in the person of England's queen? She pressed her hand to her side to still the beating of her rebellious heart, and still gazed and still listened.

When the queen and Leicester had almost reached the entrance of the grotto they paused. To the right of them rose a tinkling fountain, in the basin of which the water fell with a musical sound. All around gave evidence of the lovely summer-time. The fragrance of the flowers was everywhere; the bees hummed, the birds sang, and a pleasant zephyr played amidst the leafy branches of the trees, creating an agreeable murmur as if it gave to every leaf a tongue.

Through the apertures in the stones of which the grotto was composed Amy could not only hear the conversation that took place between the queen and Leicester, but she could see their every movement and almost hear them breathe.

Elizabeth was evidently much affected at something Leicester had said to her, for her ordinary leonine look had entirely vanished; a tear trembled in her eyes, which sought the ground, and the earl's manner was less confident than usual.

Amy's first impulse was to rush out and disclose herself, but, restraining this, she bent forward to hear what passed between her majesty and Leicester, murmuring:

"After all he is my husband, and I will not break my promise to him. He told me that the queen must on no account know anything of our union. There may be private reasons which he will explain; and something tells me that the lady by his side is Elizabeth of England—she is so majestic in her bearing. It must be she. No, no—I will keep my word, come what may."

(To be continued.)

DR. RUSSELL well observes that the following extract will startle those who think it easy to victual Paris:—"In his negotiations with Count Bismarck, M. Thiers required the besieging army to allow the admission into Paris during the month's armistice of 34,000 oxen, 80,000 sheep, 8,000 pigs, 5,000 calves, 100,000 cwt. of salt meat, 8,000,000 cwt. of hay and straw, 200,000 cwt. of flour, 30,000 cwt. of vegetables, 100,000 tons of coal, and 14,500,000 cubic feet of wood. All requisitions were meanwhile to be suspended by the Germans."

AN UNPLEASANT SITUATION.—Canadian papers mention that the government steamer "Napoleon III." has left Quebec for the Lower St. Lawrence on lighthouse service. The *Quebec Chronicle* says the principal object of the mission is to remove two men from the Bird Rocks, in the Gulf, who have been on this desolate little island for more than a month without being able to obtain the slightest assistance. The rocks are over 70ft. high, and to reach the summit the visitor must climb two perpendicular ladders over 30 feet each, an operation attended with considerable risk. At the base of the island large, sharply-out boulders of black stone are scattered at irregular distances, against which and the rock itself the waves, when the sea is running high, dash with tremendous violence and force. In launching a boat from the rocks a calm day must be selected, and even then the greatest caution ob-

served, owing to the great under-swell, which is almost as dangerous as the high running sea. One of the government schooners in the fishery protection service has made several attempts to reach the unfortunate occupants of this Robinson Crusoe island, but failed, and the commander, to save his vessel, had to throw all the provisions overboard, with which it was intended to replenish the almost exhausted stock on the island. The "Lady Head" also made an attempt to reach the charmed spot, but was unsuccessful. It is decided now, if necessary, to pull the men through the water by means of ropes tied round their bodies. Three of the boats of the "Lady Head" were smashed; 6 pieces. Mr. Tomlinson, chief engineer of the Marine and Fisheries Department, visits the locality on board the "Napoleon III.," and, as a last resource, intends to throw a small line from the ship by means of a rocket.

#### DISAPPOINTED MEN.

You meet them everywhere. At home and when visiting, on business or on pleasure, in this city and in that town, gazing wistfully at a mansion here, and popping down an alley yonder. When you take your ease at your inn, you find a specimen in the corner, looking morosely and sullenly miserable, complaining that his hot-water is cold, his brandy adulterated, his tobacco the worst he has ever had, and doing his best to make the company as miserable as himself; and when you are coming from church you hear him passing ill-natured remarks against minister, clerk, choir, and congregation, and winding up by calling himself a fool for going at all. Attired in a black frock coat, with shining elbows, and still more shining buttons, a waistcoat ten years old, with buttons of different sizes and different patterns, and trousers the original colour of which you can only guess, finished off at one extremity by a shabby, greasy, nondescript hat, and at the other by the still more shabby remnants of what had once been a pair of boots, this is the man who will wonder where young Smith gets all the money he spends, and tell you confidentially that Lloyd, Smith's employer, should have his books examined. He wouldn't give parties to friends, decorate himself with jewellery, and have a dozen suits yearly, and so he tells Smith. ("Sour grapes, my cynical friend," replies Smith.)

This is the man who wonders what Jones would have been, if his wife had not brought him some money; how long Wieding is going to stand the extravagance of his daughters, and the flirting of his wife; and if Brown is not in trouble, what he has mortgaged his house for, and given a bill of sale upon his furniture; who, forgetting that every man is a fool at least once in his life, has made his brain a dictionary of all the follies of the neighbourhood, and retails them out whenever he can find a listener, insinuating that a man who has done wrong or foolishly once, must of necessity be always doing wrong and foolish things. At a birth he will tell you that half the human race die before the age of five years, and repeat the same thing more emphatically at a christening; at a wedding, he will subtly hope that as the majority of weddings are unhappy, he trusts this may be an exception, and further hopes that the Divorce Court may have fewer cases next year, for it is lamentable to find that the cases are annually increasing; and at a funeral, hint that the deceased was no better than he—or she—ought to have been. Sour in temper, cynical in language, disagreeable in company, feared by his wife, shunned by his children, hated by his acquaintances, and sowing dissension in himself, he is a very miserable object indeed—an *unmauvais sujet*.

Such men are often gifted with great talents; clever almost to a proverb, and accomplished to a high degree, they are, in their start in life, the envy and admiration of the circle in which they move. Some take the flattery of their friends for granted, fondly fancying they are out out for fortune, and cease to exert themselves to hold in fact the position they have nominally gained by the gifts they possess, and the laudations of prejudiced friends.

INFANT MORTALITY IN LARGE TOWNS.—The Registrar-General's returns of the mortality in 17 large towns of England in the third quarter of the present year show a high rate of infant mortality. The registers for the quarter show that in Sunderland the number of deaths of infants not a year old was equal to 18.8 per cent. of the number of births registered in the quarter. In Portsmouth the ratio is 21.7 per cent. of the births; in London, 23.3 per cent.; in Wolverhampton, 23.4; in Bristol, 25.3; in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 25.7; in Salford, 26.2; in Birmingham, 27.3; in Sheffield, 27.7; in Hull, 28.4; in Manchester, 28.7; in Nottingham, 30.9; in Bradford, 32.1; in Leeds, 33.9; in Norwich, 37.1; in Leicester, 38.7. In Liverpool the ratio was no less than 39.2 per cent.; so that for every five children whose births were registered in that town in the



quarter, two children died in the quarter under one year old. The mean for the 17 towns shows a number of deaths under one year of age in the quarter amounting to 26.3 per cent. on the number of births registered in the quarter. This indicates a very high rate of infant mortality. It was the quarter in which diarrhoea is epidemic; and so also was scarlet fever. In the preceding quarter of the year, the second quarter of 1870, the mean of the 17 towns showed deaths of infants amounting to only 14.7 per cent. of the births registered in the quarter. Some allowance must be made for the circumstance that the birth-rate with which this comparison is made is always lower in the third than in the second quarter of the year. The life table shows that in the healthier districts of England out of 100 children born alive 10 die in the course of twelve months.

#### ALEXANDRE DUMAS.

IN Alexandre Dumas France has lost, certainly not one of her greatest writers, but, at any rate, one of the spoiled children of modern literature. His career as an author may be divided into two parts of very unequal length and of very unequal merit. English readers know only the Dumas of the latter period, identified with "Monte Christo" and "The Three Musketeers." But when, in 1829, the celebrated prose tragedy, "Henry III. and his Court," was brought out at the Théâtre Français, to the intense horror of the old classicists, the young author was regarded as a man of brilliant genius, equal almost to the poet who had created "Hernani," and destined, with him, to revolutionise French literature.

The thorough understanding of scenic effect, the bustle of the plot, and the complete throwing away of old æsthetic traditions, are not sufficient to explain the popularity which M. Alexandre Dumas enjoyed at once. He adroitly caught the spirit of the times, and earned reputation by it. It would be, of course, impossible to give here anything like an adequate sketch of the brilliant literary career of M. Alexandre Dumas; the reader must be referred to his amusing *Memoirs*, which under various titles occupy between thirty and forty volumes.

During the early part of his career as an author he adopted the Byronic style, because it was fashionable. When the reaction set in towards classical tragedies, he composed his "Caligula" as a kind of proof that if he liked he could equal Pierre Corneille and M. Ponsard. Nothing was required of him by the public but neatness of style, skill in forming the structure of a plot, and in accumulating episodes and incidents of the most extraordinary description. As for ideas, humour, the power of observing and delineating character, they were not to be expected. If we want to estimate as it deserves the influence which M. Alexandre Dumas has produced on French literature, we have only to see what pupils he leaves behind him.

Born July 24, 1803, M. Alexandre Dumas was therefore sixty-seven years old when he died. The complete list of his works will be found in Quérard's "Supplément à la Bibliothèque des Écrivains," tome 1, part 2, together with a number of biographical details and anecdotes of the most amusing description.

**A CENTENARIAN.**—At a recent meeting of the Brentford Board of Guardians the master of the workhouse reported that Mary Hicks, aged 104, belonging to the parish of Isleworth, died on the 24th November. She was born on the 11th of August, 1766, and was baptised on the 15th of February, 1767, at Broeseley Church, Salop. Since her admission into the workhouse, now over twenty-seven years ago, she has fared well, and was a very hale old lady, even after she had lived a century. Barely six months ago her recollection was so vivid that she gave one of the guardians a complete history of her life. She was buried in Isleworth churchyard. Four inmates followed, whose united ages amounted to 335 years (being an average of 83½ years), with four other inmates whose united ages, added to the above, amounted to 628 years (being an average for the eight of 78½ years).

**THE FIELD POST IN 1759.**—How the field post was managed during the Seven Years' War may be judged from an order issued from the Duke of Brunswick's headquarters at the time when his troops were operating on the river Lahn. It directed that sentries should be posted on both sides of the river at the spots where bridges had existed prior to the war, so that letters between the Duke and General Wutgenau or Major Schlieffen could be promptly exchanged without going round by the bridge at Wolfshausen. "The opposite sentries," explained the order, "throw the letters to each other over the Lahn. They must fasten them to a stone, but must always wrap them up well, so that if in the present bad weather they should fall into the mud they may not be moistened or soiled. You will select as sentries expert men, who will be paid for their

trouble, so that the letters are not thrown into the water by unskilful persons. As soon as a letter has in this way arrived, been brought, or rather thrown from one side of the Lahn to the other, it must be immediately despatched from Bittershausen hither by express." The order is dated Krolsdorf, December 31, 1759.

## THE PEARLS OF ERIN;

OR,  
THE HALF SISTERS.

### CHAPTER XXVII.

FOR the third, time sounded that midnight summons upon the great door of Connor Hall, and this time it was so loud and imperious in its wild clangour as to arouse the household from their beds.

Doors were heard to open and shut hurriedly, and steps resounded in the halls.

Bassantyne leaned back against the wall of Lady Kathleen's dressing-room, pistol in hand, his face drawn and seamed with the anguish of an awful expectation.

Lady Kathleen stood in listening attitude, white as marble, her eyes dilated wide with horror.

"Tell them not to open the door," whispered Bassantyne, sharply and shrilly.

"It is too late! I cannot give the order without making matters worse. Delaney has already gone to the door."

"Then I'm lost!"

"Perhaps it is not the police. I will see."

Lady Kathleen glided into her boudoir, and looked the door opening into the corridor. Then she softly and swiftly undid the fastenings of her great, wide French windows, and stepped out upon the balcony, into the midst of a group of plants and shrubs in pots.

Soreened by these, her ladyship looked over the edge of the balcony keenly and cautiously.

A group of men were below, most of them mounted. One of them held the bridles of two riderless horses. The men who had come upon these horses were those who were beating the loud tattoo upon the door.

Bending over the railing of the balcony still farther, Lady Kathleen saw that one of the men at the door, like the horsemen, was in policeman's uniform. The other, from his apparent lameness and his general appearance, she recognised as Bassantyne's enemy, Lame Bill.

She was about to retreat, when the horsemen dismounted, securing their horses to the trees. One of the men said:

"Knock louder. Wake them up, lads—"

"Whisht!" said the officer at the door. "It's coming they are. None of your hullabaloo now!"

"Better surround the Hall," suggested Lame Bill, uneasily. "Gentleman Bob is a regular desperado! He may escape by the back door while we are at the front."

"Perhaps it'll be telling me how to ate you'll be next," said the officer, testily. "As if I didn't know my own business. It's full of hints and advice you've been since we started."

Nevertheless, despite his jealousy of comments or interference, the officer, who seemed in command of the party, ordered his men to guard the rear doors.

At that moment the great door swung on its massive hinges, and Delaney appeared on the threshold, demanding what was wanted.

Lady Kathleen sped back to her dressing-room, finding Bassantyne in the attitude in which she had left him.

"It is the police, guided by Lame Bill!" she said, breathlessly. "They are surrounding the house. You must escape at once. I may be doing wrong in thus screening you—"

"But self-preservation's the first law of nature. How am I to escape?"

"Follow me quickly. Without a word."

She led the way into her bed-chamber, through her bath-room, out upon a little, narrow landing, lighted by a small round window. From this landing a circular flight of stairs led to the ground floor.

Lady Kathleen conducted the fugitive down the staircase, coming out upon a lower landing, from which there was but a single mode of egress—a small door opening into the rose-garden.

"This is a private entrance, never used now-a-days," said Lady Kathleen as she hurriedly drew the rusty bolts and bars. "It is screened on the outside by a heavy growth of ivy, and will probably escape the notice of the police. I will gain all the time I can for your escape. Now go."

She pulled open the door, its rusty hinges creaking, and Bassantyne peered cautiously out into the night.

Lady Kathleen had surmised truly. The narrow door in the house wall, grown over with ivy, and un-

screened by a porch, had escaped the observation of the policemen. There were no watchers outside.

With a muttered word of thanks, Bassantyne glided down the steps into the garden, sped along in the shadow of the rose hedge to a belt of shrubbery, under the protection of which he made for the park.

Once in the park, he believed it would be easy to make his way out of the valley into the open country outside.

Lady Kathleen stood in the little arched doorway in the wall until Bassantyne had gained the shrubbery, then she softly closed the door and fastened it securely.

She glided swiftly up the stairs, looked her bath-room door, putting the key in her pocket, and leisurely proceeded to her sitting-room.

Some one was knocking loudly at her door. She called out:

"Who is there?"

A chorus of voices answered her, prominent among which she distinguished those of Delaney the steward, and of her maid, whom she had dismissed to bed an hour before.

Going to the door, she flung it open, demanding, haughtily:

"Why am I disturbed at this hour, and in this manner? What has happened?"

She regarded the group at her threshold with flashing eyes and indignant mien.

The group consisted of nearly all her servants, Mr. and Mrs. Delaney, the police officer and one of his assistants, behind whom was Lame Bill, all sinister delight and expectant triumph.

"I beg your pardon, my lady," said the officer, respectfully, removing his hat. "I am here on a painful and most unwelcome duty, in obedience to the orders of my superiors."

"Well?" said Lady Kathleen, in apparent haughty surprise. "What is it you want? Certainly there can be no necessity to arouse a lady at this hour. If you want anything, you can apply to my steward, Mr. Delaney."

"My lady—" began Delaney, timidly and anxiously.

The officer interrupted the old steward. He was a man of some education and character, and had much of the vaunted Irish chivalry. The aspect of the lovely young creature, with her unbound hair and her great blue eyes, full of mingled haughtiness and terror, appealed to his sense of gallantry. Moreover, the Connors of Ballyconnor were one of the great families of County Wicklow, with wealth and influence—qualities which he well knew how to respect—and he had no desire to offend the latest representative of the ancient house.

"My lady," he said, "we have received information that a person known as Gentleman Bob, and under various other aliases, a fugitive convict from the penal colonies, is living under your roof—"

"Who says this?" demanded Lady Kathleen.

"I do!" declared Lame Bill, stepping forward. "It's I that gave the information. There's a big reward out for him, and I've put in a claim for it. Gentleman Bob is living at Connor Hall, under the nobbish name of Bassantyne—"

Lady Kathleen forced a smile.

"Mr. Bassantyne is my husband," she said, disdainfully. "If you desire to see him, Delaney will conduct you to his door. But why do you couple the vulgar name of some thief—at least, the name you mention sounds like the assumed name of a housebreaker—with that of Mr. Bassantyne?"

The police officer looked at the lady pityingly.

"You don't know?" he questioned. "This party here," and he indicated Lame Bill, "says you have been imposed on, my lady, and that you ran away with and married a runaway convict. And I've been sent here to apprehend the man. The police have been on the look-out for him in Dublin lately, owing to secret information they had received. This is an unpleasant duty for me, my lady, but I must obey orders. I hope that it will turn out that there is some mistake, and that Mr. Bassantyne can make matters clear at headquarters. I have been to Mr. Bassantyne's room, but he is not in. Is he not in your chamber?"

Lady Kathleen's fair cheeks reddened.

"He is not," she answered, coldly.

"Of course he is," cried Lame Bill rudely, losing his sense of politeness, if he ever had any, in his greed and longing for revenge. "You'll find him in her ladyship's rooms, Mr. Officer. This shilly-shallying ain't going to do at all. I shall report you for your want of zeal, sir, if the man escapes! You refused to guard the rear doors till I goaded you into it, and you stand here parleying and losing time, just as if you wanted to give the fellow a chance to get off!"

This may have been exactly what the officer did want, for he coloured angrily, and peremptorily ordered Lame Bill to hold his peace.

"If you doubt my word," said Lady Kathleen, addressing the officer, "you are at liberty to look through my rooms. Delaney, show him through."

The officer muttered something about the forms of the law, his respect for the Connors, and his disbelief in Lame Bill's story, but accepted the proffered guidance of Delaney, and passed on, followed by his assistants.

As he entered the sitting-room Lame Bill made a movement also to follow him, but the servants seized and held him, while he foamed and raved, and threatened them with all the terrors of the law.

The examination of her ladyship's rooms was brief. It was quite evident that Bassantyne was not concealed in them. The little private door by which he had escaped was discovered, and the officer carefully examined its fastenings by the light of a candle.

There were fresh finger-marks in the thick dust on the bolts, and at sight of these the officer's face grew grave.

Some one had evidently gone out by the private door recently.

The officer began to give credence to Lame Bill's story, which until now he had disbelieved. He examined the footprints in the dust on the stairs, and as he did so his newly formed suspicions strengthened. It became evident to him that this noble young heiress had been deluded into a marriage with a runaway convict, who had taken to flight on the approach of danger.

He opened the private door and looked out, as Bassantyne had done. Not one of his assistants was on that side of the house. Bassantyne was nowhere in sight.

"This is a bad business!" he muttered. "There is no doubt but that he has fled. Flight at such a time has a bad look!"

Old Delaney looked troubled and anxious.

"You think it's true then?" he asked. "Oh, my poor young lady! My poor lady!"

"If he's innocent, how should he know we were after him?" asked the officer. "If he's innocent, why should he fly? It goes against my heart to lift my hand against the Connors, Delaney. Lord Connor was my father's benefactor. But duty is duty, and I must try to find the fellow. I think I'll give the rest of the house a look first."

He closed and secured the door, and returned upstairs to Lady Kathleen's sitting-room.

"He's not in these rooms," he said, briefly. "I will go through the Hall!"

Delaney offered to guide him, and did so.

Lame Bill was detained outside Lady Kathleen's door by the servants until the unsuccessful search was completed, and the officer and his men took their departure to search the park and the valley. Lame Bill went with them, cursing their stupidity and inefficiency, and renewing threats to report them at head-quarters.

"The truth is," said the officer in command as he mounted and led the way to the park, "if this fellow's story is true, Bassantyne was off hours ago—as soon as he discovered that the body he had hidden in the hollow had disappeared. He would have made that discovery soon after dark, when he went to bury it. He is well mounted and on his way to Dublin or Waterford."

"Then you should send a man to Wicklow, to telegraph in every direction," said Lame Bill, impatiently, "unless you expect to make more by letting him escape!"

The officer replied to this speech only by directing one of his men to make all haste to Wicklow, to report non-success, and to telegraph to all points to which the fugitive would be likely to make his way.

Then, arousing himself to the necessity of a show of zeal and diligence, the officer despatched two others of his men to watch the passes at each end of the valley, and to prevent Bassantyne's escape, if it had not already occurred.

He had then but one man remaining, besides Lame Bill, but the latter was a force in himself. The three scoured the park, examined the hollow in which Lame Bill had been hidden, and the latter told anew the story of his recognition of Bassantyne, his conflict with him, the victory of his adversary, and how he himself had been left, stunned and senseless, as dead; and how, an hour or so later, he had come to himself, and had crept out of the hollow to a running stream near at hand; how he had washed his wounds, and made his way to the village, brimming over with fury and hatred. He told also how he had obtained a horse at the Ballyconnor inn and had ridden to Wicklow, intent on obtaining vengeance on his enemy, and had made known his story to the police, had exhibited various proofs of his truthfulness in the shape of advertised rewards for "Gentleman Bob," his own wounds, and a convincing earnestness.

All of these things, added to private intelligence received from head-quarters by the inspector concerning "Gentleman Bob," induced credence in Lame Bill's story, and a force had been placed under his guidance to conduct the capture of Bassantyne.

All these facts Lame Bill reviewed, muttering

threats of vengeance on his enemy; but no trace of Bassantyne was discovered.

"He has given us the slip," said the officer, at last. "He's not at the Hall, nor in the park. Of course he's not in the village. He has left the valley. There's only one chance left. If he hadn't got away by the time I sent the men to guard the mountain roads, we may find him a prisoner. As we shall go back by the south pass, we'll ride now to the north pass and relieve our guard!"

He rode back to the Hall and out upon the valley road, galloping swiftly towards the mountains enclosing the valley on its northern side. His assistant and Lame Bill followed him at equal speed.

A ride of a couple of miles brought them to a point where the road wound steeply through an elevated pass, and where it was bordered on the one side by ascending cliffs, and on the other by a steep precipice.

Here, sitting his horse like an old Roman sentinel, they found the policeman who had been ordered to guard that end of the valley.

"Seen anything of the fugitive?" demanded the officer, eagerly.

"Nothing, sir," was the response. "There's been nobody here. I don't think he went in this direction, but if he did he climbed the mountain, avoiding the road."

Lame Bill almost gnashed his teeth in his disappointment and rage.

The officer expressed his regret at Bassantyne's undoubted escape.

"But we've done the best we could," he added. "Fall in, my men. We're off for Wicklow, to report failure."

The four, including the road guard, set out on their return through the valley, riding rapidly. They passed Connor Hall, its park and farms, rode through the village of Ballyconnor, and ascended the narrow road that led through the mountains by what the officer had termed "the south pass."

As they approached the narrowest point of this pass the officer looked through the gloom anxiously, exclaiming:

"I don't see Wall. I told him to be here, at this point, and to await our coming!"

"What's that on the ground?" asked Lame Bill, peering ahead with strained gaze. "A man, as sure as I live!"

He sprang from his horse and rushed towards the dark object he had espied in the road, hoping to find it the prostrate figure of his enemy.

The officer followed his example, leaping to the ground.

The light of a dark lantern was thrown upon the dark heap in the road-way, and the policemen uttered simultaneously a cry of surprise.

"It's Wall," cried the officer. "He is shot in the arm, and must have tumbled off his horse. But where is his horse? Who shot him?"

These queries were answered by the wounded man himself, when a little care and attention had revived him from his unconsciousness.

"What has happened to you?" demanded the officer as the policeman's eyes opened. "Who have you been fighting with?"

The wounded man arose to his elbow, staring wildly about him.

"I don't know," he answered. "All I know is, I was waiting here, according to orders, when a man came running up the hill. I called out to him, asking who he was. And he answered by shooting me, which was all the answer he gave me, the ill-mannered hound! And the next thing I knew, I didn't know nothing! I felt myself tumbling, and I fell in a heap on the ground. And the villain has run away with my horse!"

"Was he a tall, big man with a long black beard?" eagerly demanded Lame Bill.

"I'm thinking he was taller and bigger nor a stepple," said Wall, rubbing his head. But his beard was not long—

"He's trimmed it then!" interrupted Bassantyne's enemy. "Which way did he go?"

"How could I see with no eyes to my head? And me in a faint swoon, total unconscious, with no wits about me. Is it a mad man ye are? All I know is he came and he went, and he left with me the contents of his pistol!"

"It will be easy to track him by the horse," cried Lame Bill. "We must telegraph for a man on such a horse, describing it. I told you the fellow was a perfect desperado. This highway robbery and shooting of a policeman will fix his case. You can take Wall on with you to Wicklow. As for me, I'll track the man like a bloodhound. You'd better leave a man to watch my lady of Connor Hall. She may go to her fine husband!"

The officer, alive now to the desperate character of Bassantyne, and sternly resolved upon his capture, bowed assent to these suggestions. Wall was taken up on one of the horses of his companions, while Lame Bill, with the bloodthirstiness of a sleuth-hound, set out to follow the track of Bassantyne.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

BETWEEN Dunmore Head and Dundrum Bay, on the coast of County Down, there is a little rocky point, which seems to lie continually in the deep shadow of the Mourne Mountains. Barren of vegetation, lashed by the fierce sea waves, gloomy and lonely and uncared for, save in the early morning, by the sun, but the sport of the north and east winds, it would seem to be the last spot in Ireland to be inhabited.

Yet at the junction of the point with the main land stood a long, low cabin, built of cobble-stones, and having a thatched roof and a tall, capacious chimney. It stood upon the rocks. Behind it was a green garden patch, in which a few late cabbages were seen. In front of the dwelling were the low, jagged rocks, half covered with a drift of seaweed. Upon these rocks a sail-boat was drawn up, half out of water.

This lonely cabin was owned and tenanted by the Fogarty—relatives by marriage to Mrs. Fogarty of Yew Cottage, Clondalkin. These Fogartys were described in the neighbourhood as a "bad lot," and the neighbours, of whom none lived within a mile, did them no injustice.

At present the family consisted of only Rough Fogarty, as its head was called, from his rude, rough manners, his wife, and two or three sons who spent most of their time in fishing. He had sons and daughters in America—indeed, all the better and more ambitious members of the family had emigrated from County Down years before.

Rough Fogarty was a man of reckless habits and high temper, unscrupulous, dishonest. He had been a smuggler in his younger days, but with the advance of years and infirmities he had settled down to the life of a fisherman. He owned a fishing-smack, in which his sons were now absent. He, at the moment of his introduction to the reader, was sitting out on the rocks, upon a pile of seaweed, engaged in patching a torn sail.

This was on the afternoon of the day on which Tim Fogarty, in St. George's Channel with Lady Nora Kildare, revealed himself to her in all the hideousness of his evil nature—the day also on which Lord O'Neil vainly sought for his young betrothed at Kingstown and at Black Rock.

The afternoon was half gone when a little sloop, approaching from the southward, wore in towards the point.

Rough Fogarty looked up from his work to watch her movements.

"She's not going up to the Bay," he said to himself, with considerable interest. "Looks as if she was making for the point, as I think she are! She's a clean and trim sloop—no fisher! What is she after?"

There promised to be a speedy answer to the question, for the strange sloop continued to wear towards the point, her sails fell, and the spray flying before her bow.

Presently two figures could be distinguished in the little vessel—one of them apparently that of a sailor, the other the figure of a young girl, slender and delicate, as was plainly seen when she rose up and stood looking at the shore, her hands shading her eyes.

This sloop was the one Tim Fogarty had hired at Black Rock, and it was Lady Nora Kildare and he, as the reader knows, who were now approaching the point.

The little vessel came nearer and nearer, and a little later Tim Fogarty hailed his kinsman on the shore. The latter rose up, answering the hail.

"I suppose you don't know me, Rough Fogarty," called the fugitive as the sloop drove in towards the shelter of the point. "You haven't changed a mite since I saw you last. You wear well."

"Well, I swear you've got the advantage of me," returned Rough Fogarty, with a puzzled stare at the seeming sailor.

"It seems so," said Tim, with a laugh. "But just you change the colour of my hair a little, or pull off this here wig and beard, and change this sailor toggery, and you might know me then. Praps you couldn't remember nothing about the smuggling trip on the 'Ann Doonan' neither."

Rough Fogarty's face lit up with a glow of recognition. His small gray eyes gleamed with pleasure.

"Tim Fogarty, as I'm alive!" he ejaculated.

"This way, Tim. Just inside the pint. What's up? You're rigged so that your own mother wouldn't know you. Beaks after you?"

Tim replied in the negative.

"Been after getting married, Tim?"

Tim laughed loudly.

"Does she look like it?" he asked, pointing to the young Lady Nora's scornful, scowling face.

"She's a highfyer, Rough; too high for me!" By this time the sloop had run into a place sheltered from the swell. Tim dropped his anchor, and drew up the rope by which the little row-boat was attached to the stern of the sloop.

"We've got to the end of our journey for the pre-



sent, Lady Nora," he said, addressing his captive. "Let me help you down into the boat!"

But the young heiress declined his assistance, and clambered down into the boat alone, Tim Fogarty standing it with his hands.

He followed her into it, and rowed swiftly to the point.

The old man, Rough, was waiting to help them out on the rocks. He gave his hand to Lady Nora, who availed herself of it, shuddering.

As she gained a footing on the slippery seaweed she glanced towards the cabin, and beheld a woman standing in the door-way. The sight of one of her own sex brought a gleam of hope to her heart.

Old Rough surveyed the dainty figure of the young girl in its stylish and handsome attire, and he did not fail to remark her high-bred air, her look of hauteur and unrest, the jewelled rings on her white and taper fingers, and the watch at her belt.

"What game is up, Tim?" he asked, with a significant glance at Lady Nora.

"A little speculation," answered Tim. "I'll tell you all about it. What I want now is a quiet boarding-place for this young lady, so I brought her to you. Can you give her a good room?"

"The best in the house," said the old man, wonderingly.

"With a lock on the door—on the outside?"

"I can fix one. Is it a prisoner you've got here, Tim, now?"

"It's not much else," replied Tim. "But there's the old lady in the doorway. We'll go up to the cabin, and I'll give you your fill of news."

He seized the arm of the young Lady Nora, and hurried her over the sharp rocks and slippery weeds to the cabin.

The old woman came out to meet them, her countenance indicative of surprise.

She was a worn and bent creature, gaunt of frame, her sallow skin drawn tightly over her large bones. Her eyes looked out from under heavy brows, as shaggy as those of her husband. She looked like one who works hard on insufficient and unwholesome food. She had an air of chronic discontent and repining, and indeed most of her time was spent in bewailing the hardships of her lot, and the want of even the comforts of life.

It may be imagined, then, with what envious eyes the poor old woman looked at the bright young being, in dainty garments, coming over the rocks towards her.

"Another aristocrat!" she muttered, fiercely. "Burn them all! I hate them!"

It was with a glance of hatred she met the earnest, pleading gaze of Lady Kildare.

She retreated into the cabin as the visitors approached, and Tim hurried his captive in after her.

It was a long, low room that in which they found themselves, with smoke-blackened walls, and but a single small window. A fire of dried sea-weed was burning and smoking on the stone hearth, and over the fire hung a kettle of potatoes. Other preparations for a meal there were none.

"You don't know me, Ann, I suppose?" said Tim, good-naturedly.

"No," snapped the old woman, with an injured air. "I don't know you, nor I don't want to. Rich folks have naught in common with such as we!"

"But I'm not rich, Ann," laughed Tim. "I mean to be though, and you can be too, if you'll do as I tell you. So you don't know me, eh?—not know Tim Fogarty of Clondalkin?"

The woman's sullen face brightened. She came forward, extending her hand, with a muttered apology for her rudeness.

"The young lady?" she asked, with a sidelong glance at Lady Nora.

"She is Lady Nora Kildare!"

The woman courted humbly enough at the sound of the young girl's title.

"She is poor enough," said Tim as his captive seated herself wearily on a bench near the door, against which the old man carelessly leaned. "She's lost her estates up in Antrim, and hasn't a penny in the world, barring what she has in her pocket."

"Pity they couldn't all lose their estates!" muttered the old woman.

"But," continued Tim, "she has a guardian who wants her out of the way. He gave me twenty pounds to put her overboard, but I concluded she was worth more alive than dead. If her guardian wants to get rid of her, it stands to reason I can get a hold on him by keeping her alive. I've got some ideas in my head to make money out of him and the new Earl of Kildare. I want your help."

"You can have it," assented old Rough.

"By paying for it," added the old woman. "What do you want of us?"

"I've got to go back to Clondalkin to see this Dublin lawyer. I want to leave the young lady in safe hands for a week, perhaps for weeks and months. You'll have to keep her close. Give her a neat room, plenty to eat, and keep her safe, and I'll give you five pounds a week while she stays."

This sum appeared munificent, even princely to the old couple.

"Five pounds a week!" said old Rough. "Sure I'd pretty nigh sell my soul for that."

"We'll keep her as safe as a bird in a cage," declared the old woman. "I'll show you the room we'll give her."

She opened the door of an adjoining apartment. Tim looked in. It was small and neat, with a rude bedstead, a wooden floor, and a three-legged chair. It had no window, but a small aperture a few inches square and unglazed sufficed to admit air and light. Altogether the room was better and cleaner and more suitable to his purpose than Tim Fogarty expected.

"It will do," he said, with a satisfied smile. "Come, my lady. This is your prison."

Resistance would have been folly. She could not struggle against three, so the young Lady Nora arose wearily and entered the room assigned her.

But if she was outwardly submissive, she was not so at heart.

Already she was considering the idea of bribing this old couple to set her free. She had money and jewels on her person enough to buy them a score of times over.

It seemed almost as if Tim Fogarty read her thoughts. As she passed into the little inner room he said:

"I shall stay till night, so you may give me my supper when you will, Ann. The sooner the better."

"I have a fish in the grate," said old Rough; and he departed to get it.

The old woman followed him to get an armful of dry wood to replenish her fire.

Tim Fogarty pushed open the door of the little room, intruding himself into Lady Nora's presence, and closed the door behind him.

"If you please, Lady Nora," he said, fixing his evil eyes full upon her, "I want your purse. It's no good to cry out. Old Rough and his wife are down on the beach, out of earshot."

"You cannot have it!" answered Lady Nora, with unexpected spirit.

"Shall I take it?" he asked, approaching her roughly. "If it's to be a fight, we'll see which will win!"

As the question had resolved itself thus into one of brute violence, the young girl drew out her purse silently and gave it to him. What else could she do?

"Your watch and chain?" demanded the ruffian. These were also yielded.

"Your rings and brooch."

The young girl hesitated. She listened, but in vain, for the sound of returning steps. But none was heard.

Noting her hesitation, Tim Fogarty advanced nearer to her with a grim and almost murderous look. He caught in his iron grasp one of her small hands, but she wrenched it from him, and in a panic of terror loosened her brooch, dropping it and her rings into his great red hand.

"Have you any more valuables?" asked the ruffian.

The girl shook her head.

"Then you can't bribe your way out!" said Fogarty. "This speculation is turning out well for me. There's no danger of your getting free before my return."

He put her purse and jewellery in his pocket, and went out into the larger room.

A frugal supper was cooked and served. Tim Fogarty told to his appreciative audience the story of his adventures in and escapes from Australia.

He promised them money, and completely won them over to his interests. A fastening—a simple wooden bar, fitting into iron rests—was devised and put in operation for the door of the prisoner's room, which opened outward. About dusk Tim Fogarty, well pleased with the treasures in his pockets and his pecuniary prospects, set sail on his return to Dublin.

Then poor young Lady Nora, her high courage deserting her at last, gave herself up to the realization of the full horrors of her position.

(To be continued.)

CO-OPERATIVE ASSOCIATIONS.—For some time an Indian Tea Association for London has been proposed, with the object of improving the quality and also increasing the consumption of Indian tea. A paper was recently read at the Society of Arts for doing the like with cheese, by extending the American co-operative system lately introduced here, and setting up factory dairies. These have proved cheese academies, employing and paying well the best cheese-makers, and training pupils. The dairy-maid of the pastoral poets is threatened with a restriction of her functions to milking cows. During the discussion a Cheshire champion, amid roars of laughter, bravely maintained that the touch of the

tip of the dairymaid's finger is superior to all thermometer tests.

AN ELEPHANT "ON STRIKE."—It is lucky there are no trades unions among elephants, for an elephant "on strike" is as destructive as a Sheffield unionist. An elephant employed by the Government of India in hauling tank logs, for the Forest Department, in the Anamallay Forest, lately brought about a suspension of operations for above a fortnight. He began by knocking down his keeper, but luckily did not kill him. He then made for the huts of the keepers, whose wives and families were driven into the jungle. He displayed his skill in pulling down the huts, smashed up the carts and implements, and destroyed a quantity of provisions stored up for his brother elephants. After keeping the settlement in alarm for some fifteen days, he was shot in one of the logs, and then caught and chained.

#### THE CHISWICK GARDENS.

THE well-known gardens of the Royal Horticultural Society at Chiswick have lately been shorn of their fair proportions. For some years past the financial state of the Society has been such that it has been unable to keep up these gardens properly, and arrangements have now been made by which the landlord, the Duke of Devonshire, relieves the Society of some portion of their anxieties, by taking off their hands about half of the garden, including the Arboretum, the Pinetum, the Orchard, and the Wilderness Walk.

The Society retains some eighteen acres, on which are erected numerous glass houses, and it is expected that the space will still be sufficient for the prosecution of experiments in practical and scientific horticulture. A sale was held recently, when some thousands of fruit-trees, shrubs, etc., were disposed of at high prices. The loss of the Arboretum is a serious matter, as it contained many choice examples of rare and noble trees. The maples are especially fine and interesting, and it is to be hoped the duke will see the desirability of retaining intact such interesting specimens. The loss of the orchard, containing a vast number of authentically named fruit-trees, is less a matter for regret, as arrangements have been made by which at least the best kinds may be preserved by grafting on dwarf-stocks, etc., so as to grow them in less compass.

The Pinetum, too, is not a great loss, as, generally speaking, the pines did not do well at Chiswick, and, moreover, extensive arrangements are now being carried out at Kew to form there an extensive collection of these plants. The Wilderness Walk is, we fear, irreparably doomed. It contained a vast number of rare or little known plants, and was a perfect hunting-ground for the botanist. The rule of might, however, has gradually exterminated many of the rarities—the stronger have ousted the weaker, and as for years past no care has been taken to preserve the weaker, the result of the struggle for existence was not doubtful even before the eligibility of the site for building purposes had finally sealed the fate of the "Wilderness."

THE PREACHER IN A DILEMMA.—An awkward claim was made upon a street preacher on a recent Sunday afternoon. While exhorting a large audience in an animated strain, two women came to the front and each claimed him as her runaway husband. The preacher indignantly denied all knowledge of them, but fearing chastisement from the people, who were greatly excited, took to his heels on the first opportunity, and effected his escape.

EX-GOVERNOR EYRE has settled down in the country. The total fund raised for this gentleman was 15,000*l.* Rather more than half of this was absorbed by law costs, and the expenses of the fund; and he received a cheque for 7,000*l.* The government will pay him 4,000*l.* to defray the cost of his defence, this being the rule when the defendant is a government servant put on his trial for charges relating to his official duties.

A WINDFALL.—A rare piece of good fortune has lately befallen an old lady living at Bosham, in West Sussex, who was known to the inhabitants of that place as "Madame Idle"—the title of Madame being bestowed upon her from the fact that she had spent part of her life at Paris. She lived upon a small income, that placed her just above the scuffling population from whom she sprang and amidst whom she lived. A short time ago she received a letter, which, not being able to read herself, she took with her on her next visit to the neighbouring city of Chichester and asked one of the tradespeople with whom she dealt to decipher it for her. He did so, and found it was from the solicitor of the late Marquis of Hertford, who died a short time ago at Paris, to the effect that his lordship had left her by his will an annuity of 8,000*l.* a year! She has since come into the receipt of this handsome provision for life, and has provided out of it for her relatives, who were in a humble position of society.

## THE LONDON READER AND LIFE AND FASHION.

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## NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

**WAX FLOWERS.**—We have no knowledge of the song in question.

**GIANNETTA.**—Songs with the sol-fa notation may be procured at Novello's, Berners Street, W.

**MARGARET AND VESPER.**—The announcements and replies thereto are inserted free of charge.

**M. W. O.**—Bathe the hands frequently in warm water; apply also glycerine with the aid of loose kid gloves as often as convenient.

**JAMES Q.**—The piece contains many marks of carelessness. In some places the allusions are either unintelligible or erroneous, in all they are bombastic.

**E. S. and F. S.**—The two communications have reached us and have been perused. They are, we regret to say, of insufficient merit for publication.

**HENRY V. T.**—The breakage of the ice covering the ornamental water in Regent's Park, an accident by which many lives were lost, occurred in the winter of 1866-7.

**EMMY.**—1. The handwriting, though neat, has peculiar angles which are not agreeable to the eyesight. 2. Our correspondents' announcements are inserted free of charge.

**T.'s address to an absent friend** is so hyper-romantic that it cannot be posted. It is, indeed, an illustration of the power of fancy—a landmark, perhaps, for surely the force of fancy can no farther go.

**ANXIOUS INQUIRY.**—It is impossible to say, without an inspection, what injury your barometer has received. Your best course is to take it to a manufacturer of similar instruments.

**A CONSTANT READER (Kingston).**—We quite agree with you that there appears to be a mistake somewhere. You have certainly made out a case for inquiry. It is probable, however, in going into the matter we may find that a good deal can be said on the other side.

**M. M.**—You have not carried out your idea. The many blemishes in your exhortatory lines are surpassed by a yet greater fault. You conclude without even an allusion to the transcendent event which, from the title you give to the piece, you would have us suppose is the foundation of your appeal.

**HARRIET.**—A married woman can make a disposition by will of property settled to her separate use. The recent Act provides that the individual earnings of married women shall be placed in the same category as property settled to a separate use. Therefore a married woman can now dispose of her earnings by will.

**L. B. C.**—The following is recommended as a good method for making garden walks. Procure a sufficient quantity of stone broken rather fine; spread it out, basin fashion, and into the basin pour some heated tar; mix well. Then lay over your paths smoothly, sprinkle powdered quicklime over the top, and roll.

**H. M. P.**—Court-plaster is made by applying several coats of a solution of isinglass with a little tincture of benzoin added, whilst warm, with a brush, to a piece of silk stretched on a frame, each coat being allowed to dry before the next is put on. It is supposed to be so called from having been used in former times by court ladies for their patches.

**LUCK.**—It is the privilege of the fair sex to make a selection in a more open manner than is allowable to gentlemen. There can be no objection to your inspection of the curts of more than one. If, however, either of those upon whom your notice has fallen were even to think of placing any other lady upon a par with Lucy, his chance with Lucy would sink to zero.

**ALICE C.**—Hilda, Alice, and Ada, are all names expressive of nobility, the dignity attaching to the last exceeding that expressed by the two former. Anne signifies gracious, Elizabeth the oath of the Almighty, and Louisa a lady who will defend the people's cause in time of need. Amelia has a softer meaning, and is synonymous with beloved. No exception can be taken to the handwriting on the score of utility.

**ELLA L.**—1. You will be guilty of a great indiscretion if you tamper with your complexion in the manner proposed. Apart from the considerations of climate, solar influences, atmospheric changes, and open-air exercise, the peculiarities of the complexion are better regulated by internal than external applications. An improved diet and occasional medicine will be the best remedy for the spots. 2. Knitted woollens are often disposed of to the occupiers of counters in bazaars.

**J. B. R.**—The exposition of your query in a clear manner would occupy more space than we can give to it.

You should consult works on electro-magnetism, of which any good bookseller can furnish you with a list. We will say, however, that if a battery be made to supply a current to more than one magnet, the sustaining power of each will be less than the sustaining power of a single magnet, where the whole force of the battery is applied to it alone.

**A. M.** should place a sheet of glass, previously washed clean with water, on a table, and rub the whole surface with a rubber of cotton, wetted with distilled water, and afterwards with a solution of Rochelle salts in distilled water (1 of salt to 200 of water). Then take a solution, previously prepared by adding nitrate of silver to ammonia of commerce; the silver being gradually added until a brown precipitate commences to be produced; the solution is then filtered. For each square yard of glass take as much of the above solution as contains 20 grammes (about 309 grains) of silver, and to this add as much of a solution of Rochelle salt as contains 14 grammes of salt, and the strength of the latter solution should be so adjusted to that of the silver solution that the total weight of the mixture above mentioned may be 60 grammes. In a minute or two after the mixture is made it becomes turbid, and it is then immediately to be poured over the surface of the glass, which has previously been placed on a perfectly horizontal table, but the plate is blocked up at one end, to give it an inclination about 1 in 40; the liquid is then poured in such a manner as to distribute it over the whole surface without allowing it to escape at the edges. When this is effected, the plate is placed in a horizontal position, at a temperature of about 68 degrees Fahrenheit. The silver will begin to appear in about two minutes, and in about twenty or thirty minutes sufficient silver will be deposited. The mixture is then poured off the plate, and the silver it contains afterwards recovered. The surface is then washed four or five times, and the plate set up to dry. When dry, the plate is varnished, by pouring over it a varnish composed of gum damar, 20 parts; asphaltate (bitumen of India), 5; gutta-percha, 5; and benzine, 75. This varnish hardens on the glass, and the plate is then ready for use.

## LEND A HAND.

Life is made of ups and downs—

    Lend a hand!

Life is made of thorns and crowns;

    If you would the latter wear,

    Lift some crushed heart from despair—

    Lend a hand!

Crowns are not alone of gold—

    Lend a hand!

Diamonds are bought and sold;

    But the crowns that good men hold

    Come from noble deeds alone—

    Lend a hand!

Many crowns that many wear—

    Lend a hand!

Never in the sunlight glaze;

    Diamonds in them never shine,

    Yet they hold a light divine—

    Lend a hand!

Hold a light that ne'er shall fade—

    Lend a hand!

Beauty art hath never made;

    For these crowns that good men wear

    Everlasting are, as rare—

    Lend a hand!

Would you own so bright a crown?

    Lend a hand!

When you see a brother down,

    Lead him from the deep, dark night,

    And place him in the morning light—

    Lend a hand!

C. O.

**BILL**, twenty, tall, light curly hair, and has good expectations. Respondent must be about the same age.

**ETHELFRITHA**, tall, young, handsome, loving, amiable, and domesticated. Respondent must not exceed twenty-two, must be handsome, tall, and a Catholic.

**EDNA**, eighteen, 5ft. 2in., brown eyes, brown hair, pretty, affectionate, and cheerful. Respondent must be about twenty.

**ALF**, twenty, 5ft. 5in., fair, good tempered, and in a respectable situation. Respondent must be young and pretty.

**NELLIE C.**, nineteen, tall, fair, blue eyes, light hair, and domesticated. Respondent should be tall, dark, loving, and fond of home.

**L. F.**, tall, dark, good looking, and a tradesman with fair prospects. Respondent should be a Herefordshire lassie.

**S. S.**, amiable, and domesticated. Would like to correspond with a gentleman between thirty and forty, seeking a true and fond wife.

**ELIZABETH**, Auburn hair, blue eyes, and will have money on her wedding-day. Respondent must be tall, dark, and handsome.

**CHARLES S.**, nineteen, short and broad, large gray eyes, and dark brown hair. Respondent must be about seventeen, dark, and good looking.

**LOVELY MAGGIE**, twenty-two, medium height, brown hair, hazel eyes, loving, affectionate, and truthful. Respondent must be steady and honourable.

**H. M. S. J.**, twenty-six, tall, good looking, good tempered, and loving. Respondent must not be over twenty-three and fond of home.

**PORTLAND BILL**, twenty-one, 5ft. 7in., blue eyes, fair complexion, good looking, and in the Navy. Respondent must be about the same age.

**DILLY BOX**, twenty, 5ft. 6in., hazel eyes, brown hair, good tempered, fond of home and music, and in the Navy. Respondent must be loving.

**WHITE SQUALL**, twenty-three, 5ft. 7in., hazel eyes, black hair, dark complexion, very good singer, in the Navy. Respondent must be domesticated, loving, and not over twenty.

**A YOUNG ORPHEAN**, twenty-three, petite, fair, light

brown hair, well educated, musical, fond of home, domesticated, of good family, and has a little money. Respondent must not be over twenty-six, and tall.

**MAUDE AND ALICE.**—Maude, twenty, tall, and dark. Alice, twenty-one, short, fair, and good looking. Respondents must be in a good trade, of good appearance, and fond of home.

**PRIDE OF THE NAVY**, 5ft. 4in., gray eyes, brown hair, light complexion, good tempered, can sing, and play the guitar. Respondent must be good tempered, domesticated, and fond of home.

**CAPTAIN OF THE FLATS**, twenty-three, 5ft. 9in., dark complexion, blue eyes, dark hair and whiskers, good looking, good tempered, and in the Navy. Respondent must be dark, and musical.

**CAPTAIN STORM**, twenty-three, 5ft. 9in., light complexion, stout, and has a good income. Respondent must be twenty-one, good looking, well educated, and have an income.

**EDITH**, seventeen, tall, brown eyes, brown hair, and will have money on her wedding-day. Respondent must be tall, dark, handsome, and also have money; would like to keep a wife comfortably, and upwards of twenty years of age.

**J. R.**, 5ft. 7in., dark eyes, dark brown curly hair, black moustache, amiable, loving, plays the piano, sings, and has a moderate income. Respondent must be tall, lady-like, fond of music, and have a business of her own.

**ALICE J. S.**, twenty, cheerful, and domesticated. Respondent must be fond of home, steady, kind, able to keep a wife comfortably, and upwards of twenty years of age.

**WILD ROSE and LOWLY NELL.**—Wild Rose, medium height, very fair, loving, and domesticated. Lonely Nell, tall, dark, quiet, and fond of home; both will have money when they come of age. Respondents must be tall, dark, and fond of home.

**CAMELIA**, eighteen, 5ft. 4in., dark brown hair, dark eyes, good looking, good tempered, affectionate, domesticated, and fond of music. Respondent must be dark, affectionate, fond of home, handsome, taller than she is, and able to keep a wife comfortably.

**NETTIE S.**, eighteen, 5ft. 6in., faxen hair, large dark blue eyes, very long black lashes, small mouth, good teeth, very small hands and feet, good figure, and entitled to property. Respondent must be tall, handsome, dark, and not older than five-and-twenty.

## COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

**W. R.** is responded to by—"Gianetta," nineteen, tall, dark, good looking, and fond of home, has one or two accomplishments, and is very partial to sailors.

**LOVELY FRED** by—"Orania," seventeen, tall, fair, pretty, fond of home, amiable, and affectionate.

**A. J. B.** by—"C." young, handsome, amiable, and loving.

**F. B.** by—"Lonely Annie," 5ft. 5in., fair, light hair, and light blue eyes.

**CONFESSION BARS** by—"Polly," eighteen, fair, dark brown hair, blue eyes, tall, cheerful, and affectionate.

**CLAUDIA** by—"Tom," young, tall, fond of home, has a good income, and holds a very good position in society.

**BERTHA** by—"Captain of the Crossroads," 5ft. 7in., black hair, gray eyes, good tempered, and fond of home.

**G. F.** by—"Laughing Nellie," eighteen, 5ft. 5in., fair, brown hair, blue eyes, and a tradesman's daughter.

**MAGGIE WITH CARE** by—"Mortlock," twenty-three, medium height, fair, a mechanic, and able to keep a wife.

**LITTLE POLLY** by—"Harry," thirty-three, dark complexion, fond of home, and a petty officer in the Navy.

**CLARE** wishes "Engineer" to write to her and enclose his card.

**FLORENCE**, pretty, and well educated. Would like the carte of "G. S. M."

**MARIAH H.**—If you are satisfied with the description of the respondent you should write again.

**PAUL ROSE** would be happy to receive "Moss Hill's" carte.

**KATHLEEN MAVOURNEE** would be glad to hear from "A Kentish Man," with a view to further acquaintance.

**EMILY** would like to hear from "W. R. F." and would like to exchange carte.

**FANNY** would like to hear from "Charles E." as to his position in life.

**T. J. S.** by—"Agnes G." twenty-three, brown hair, and hazel eyes;—"M. A. H." twenty-five, dark hair, blue eyes, loving, and one who would make a home happy;—"Lively Carrie," dark hair and eyes, young, and tall;—"A Little Sea Bird," twenty, short, lively, dark brown hair and eyes, accomplished, and domesticated;—"Annie," twenty, 5ft. 4in., dark brown hair, and fond of home;—"Sea Nymph," twenty-one, tall, dark hair and eyes, fair complexion, and fond of home;—"C. J. R." good tempered and fond of home;—"E. D." twenty-one, tall, dark, has no objection to travel;—"H. B." nineteen, medium height, dark, loving, and would like to go to sea;—"Saucy Flora," nineteen, tall, dark, good looking, and is entitled to some property when of age; and—"I. C. C." twenty-four, medium height, dark hair and eyes.

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**NOTICE.**—Part 92, for JANUARY, Now Ready, price 7d., containing Steel Plate Engraving, coloured by hand, of the latest Fashions, with large Supplement Sheet of the Fashions for January.

**N.B.**—CORRESPONDENTS MUST ADDRESS THEIR LETTERS TO THE EDITOR OF "THE LONDON READER," 334, Strand, W.C.

**H.**—We cannot undertake to return Rejected Manuscripts. As they are sent to us voluntarily, authors should retain copies.



# PLAITED DOOR MAT, BORDER OF HANDKERCHIEF IN POINT LACE, &c., &c.

## PLAITED DOOR MAT.—Nos. 1 & 2.

THIS MAT (No. 1) is composed of separate strips, the execution of which can be learned from No. 2. Gray yarn is the material employed for this mat. Join four double threads together, and unite these by



PLAITED DOOR MAT.—No. 1.

passing similar yarn through them in point de reprise, in the manner shown by No. 2. After completion of the separate strips, each of which should be about an inch and a half in breadth, they are combined into a mat by plaiting them together in the manner shown in No. 1. The edges of the mat are then surrounded with a fringe of gray yarn. This is netted to the mat diagonally backwards and forwards, forming a border, and leaving a fringe of about two inches and a half, the loops of which are subsequently severed.

## BORDER OF A HANDKERCHIEF IN POINT LACE AND TATTING.—No. 3.

WE have given so much about point lace that further instructions are unnecessary. This looks very beautiful when worked. At the edge all round is tatted worked plain with one picot in the centre.

## ROSETTE IN CROCHET.

THIS rosette, according to the size and the working material chosen, may be made available when joined either for pillow cases, thin counterpanes, anti-macassars, or (worked with fine thread) for trimming chemisettes, ladies' cuffs, or gentlemen's cravats. Before beginning the work we would direct our fair readers' attention to the abbreviations used.

σ stitch, s s single stitch, c chain, c s chain stitch, sc scallop, p picot, l s long stitch.

Begin in the centre. Make a round of about 10 c, close it with a s s, and crochet 1st round.—Always alternately 1 s s in the next round 1 p and 1 s s in the 1st of the same, at the end of the round of s s to the middle of the first p.

2nd round.—4 c, 1 s s in the central s of the same p, \* 3 c, 2 through 4 c of separate s s in the next p. From \* repeat to the last s s in the s of the 1st p, and in the 1st of the next 3 c.

3rd round.—3 l s, the next s instead of the 1 s, 3 c, \* 3 l s in the middle of the next 3 c, 1 p, repeat from \*.

4th round.—1 s s in the last of the 1 s of the previous round, 4 c, 2 l s in both the next s, which must be worked together with the loop on the needle, 3 p, \* 3 in 1 collective l s in the next 3 l s of the former round, 3 p, repeat from \*.

5th round.—1 c of s s in last of the 4 c at the beginning of the previous round, 2 c, which are carried behind the p, 1 s s between the 1st and 2nd p of the previous round, 3 c, 1 c, 2 l s between the 2nd and 3rd p of the previous round, \* 3 p, 2 l s between the 1st and 2nd of the next, 3 p, 4 c, 2 l s between the 2nd and 3rd of the same 3 p. Repeat from \* to the end of the round. 3 p and 1 l s in the 1st s of this round.

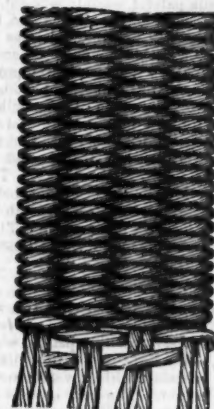
6th round.—1 c, 1 s s round the next 4 c, 3 c, 5 l s round the next 4 c, 3 c, 5 l s round the same 4 c, \* 1 p, each 2 through a p divided 1 s round the next p of the previous round, 1 p, 6 l s round the next 4 c. Repeat from \*. At the end of the round 1 s in the last 1 s, and fasten off the thread.

## KNITTED PETTICOAT.

BRIOCHE stitch is a very good one for a petticoat, and we should think would not be found very diffi-

cult, and knit them backwards and forwards in the same manner.

Another still easier way would be to knit the petticoat in stripes of two colours, consisting alternately of any number of plain rows backwards and forwards, and then another stripe knitted alternately plain and purl, so as to appear all plain on the right side. The same number of stitches (120) might be cast on for the breadth, and when very nearly long enough, 16 or twenty rows should be ribbed, 2 plain, 2 purl



PART OF MAT.—No. 2.

(keeping the rib on both sides) to bring it into the waist.

## FASHIONS.

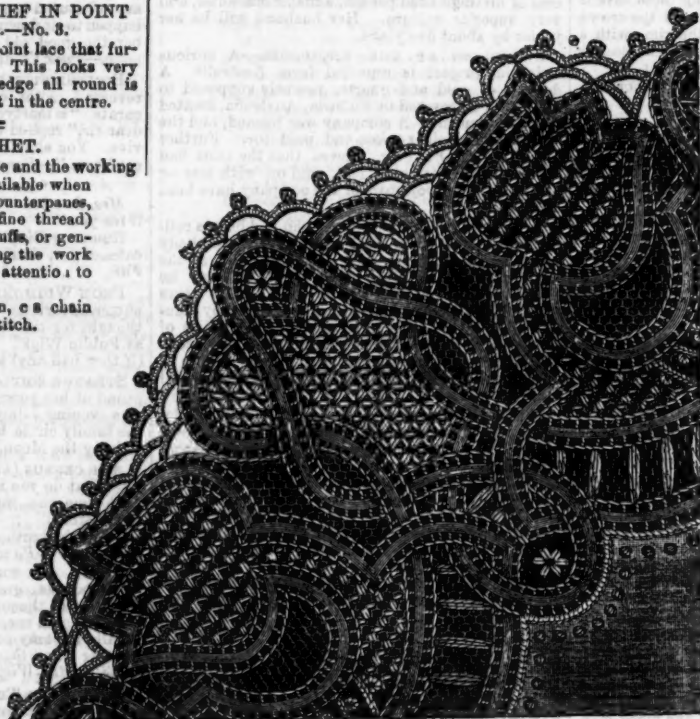
WINTER COSTUMES.—Although many invisible tints are in vogue for winter costumes, black still remains first in favour. There are handsome suits of the soft drab shade called mouse ear, of the dark London smoke, alligator gray, the crocodile, with purple-gray tinge, plum-colour, puce, brown, and of the invisible tints of green and blue, yet black costumes are selected in preference, not merely through motives of economy, but because they are most distinguished looking.

Among black suits those of velvet are the richest of the season. Blue-black velvet is used, and as black does not shade well, the garniture of gros grain or of lace should have precisely the same tint as the velvet. Coal black silk or lace looks like rusty brown blue-tinted velvet. A long casaque and single skirt is the design of velvet suits intended for the street; a short basque and long upper skirt are preferred with costumes that are sometimes worn indoors.

In carriage costumes with demi-train the casaque skirt is long enough to form a second slight train, but may be draped shorter for walking dresses. A novel style has the centre width of the casaque skirt cut quite long, folded in a broad box-pleat tapering to a point at the top, and attached to the corsage, half-way down the back by a rich passementerie ornament. This pointed fold is somewhat like the Watteau in effect, and is very graceful.

Flounces, fur bands, lace, gros grain folds, passementerie, and ostrich feathers are the trimmings for velvet. Gathered velvet flounces, not bound but faced top and bottom with gros grain, the gathering made scant, are very fashionable. Lace or fringe is sometimes added to the edges, but the greater number are plain. Narrow alternating flounces of gros grain and velvet are seen on velvet skirts.

Kilt-pleated velvet flounces, pointed below, and headed with gros grain bands, are very stylish, but they make the dress too heavy for comfort. Lace flounces and feather bands are too frail to be popular for outdoor costumes. The strong guipure lace and the new duchess point are preferred by many to finer thread lace. The handsomest velvet suits prepared for midwinter are those that have merely a band of



BORDER FOR HANDKERCHIEF IN POINT LACE.—No. 3.

rich sable for trimming, or if this is beyond the wearer's purse, simply two thick cords or piping folds of gros grain around the casaque and skirt.

Next after velvet, black silk costumes with velvet flounces are most admired. Puffs of velvet, with the fullness held in box-pleats placed at wide intervals, are stylish trimmings. A velvet vest, broad cuffs, and a postillion of velvet remodel last year's corseges. Thread lace is most used on silk suits; guipure is for velvet and cashmere.

A black silk paletot, warmly wadded, is a favourite garment, not with black silks alone, but with coloured costumes. Few new dresses are trimmed with merely one wide flounce. There are usually two or three narrow flounces overlapping each other, and finished by a very elaborate heading.

A rich heading is made of bias silk five inches wide, edged top and bottom with velvet piping, or with narrow lace. Flat knots are tied in the silk at intervals of eight or ten inches, and the band is slightly puffed between the knots. This is placed above two or three flounces, one row being sufficient, as the flounces lap over those beneath them. A fur band is a new heading for flounces. The black marten, gray cony, and chinchilla are all used.

#### BONNETS.

VELVET bonnets trimmed with two shades of the same colour are very much worn, as, for instance, a bonnet in blue velvet, with a plaited wreath of dark-blue velvet, and a light blue satin, with velvet bow and feather to match. Black velvet and white satin, with white feather. The new browns are also very effective when arranged this way. The wreath in these styles is generally placed upon a lace of the lighter shade. A lappet of velvet, with an edging of fringe, is placed at the back, falling over the hair. A bunch of flowers is placed in the front—roses being mostly preferred. Tea roses are in great favour, and are nearly always seen with black velvet bonnets.

In hats the prevailing shape is the Tyrolean in felt. These are trimmed with velvet and feathers, much after the styles of bonnets. The edges are bound with velvet, and a wreath is worn of plaited velvet, with a tassel of feathers covering the whole of the top. One or two lappets are added at the back. A velvet bow with clasp is placed at the side near the front.

Another favourite mode of trimming these hats is to arrange velvet in box pleats all round the crown of the hat, standing straight from the rim, with a velvet bow and a feather to match. Each pleat is sometimes fastened by a small jet ornament.

Jet is very much used in the ornamentation of both bonnets and hats.

THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH has made choice of ex-Governor Eyre's son as one of the junior officers of the "Galatea," of which the duke is the commander.

ALTHOUGH it is not usual for Her Royal Highness the Princess Louise to accept presents, an exception has been made (owing to the peculiar circumstances of the case) in reference to a shawl, the work of a blind girl in the Edinburgh Blind Asylum. The same girl has been privileged to do work for Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen.

EXETER CATHEDRAL RESTORATION.—Chancellor Harrington has given 4,000*l.* towards the sum required to restore the choir of Exeter Cathedral. The amount required was 15,000*l.*, and it has been completed by the chancellor's munificent gift. It was computed that the sum necessary to restore the whole of the cathedral will exceed 50,000*l.*

AN IRISH gentleman in London, whose relatives in Paris were in despair at not having heard from him, adopted the expedient of writing a very Hibernian epistle to Count Bismarck, in which he enclosed a letter addressed to his friends in Paris, and prayed the chancellor to facilitate its transmission to them. The appeal proved successful, for a day or two ago the Irishman received, per balloon post, an answer to his letter.

MOTHER-OF-PEARL.—The iridescent shades of mother-of-pearl do not depend upon the nature of the substance, but upon its structure. The microscopic wrinkles or furrows which run across the surface of every slice reflect the light in such a way as to produce chromatic effect. Sir David Brewster has shown that if we take with very fine black wax, or with the fusible alloy of D'Arcot, an impression of mother-of-pearl, it will possess the iridescent appearance.

A PARLIAMENTARY return of slave vessels captured in 1869 shows 31 captured off the East Coast of Africa between the 10th of February and the 27th of May. 1,102 slaves were emancipated by these captures. The captors have the option of claiming a bounty of 5*l.* per head on the slaves, or 4*l.* per ton on the tonnage of the vessel, and they

claim, of course, that which amounts to the largest sum. The bounty awarded to 23 of these capturing ships amounted to 12,815*l.*; in the other eight cases the bounties had not been awarded when the return was prepared.

FRESH green peas grown in the open air have been gathered in a garden on the Edgbaston side of Birmingham during the present month.

So many young men have volunteered as drivers in the Royal Artillery, that orders have been received at Woolwich to suspend recruiting for that branch of the service.

MRS. AGASSIZ says that in certain Amazonian tribes, on the day of his marriage, while the wedding festivities are going on, the bridegroom's hands are tied up in a paper bag filled with fire-ants. If he bears this torture smilingly and unmoved he is considered fit for the trials of matrimony.

A FRENCH paper states that Mdlle. Marguerite Bollenger has died of small-pox at Cassel. She has left to her surviving child (the one so often mentioned in the secret papers of the Tuileries) a residence in the Avenue Friedland, a splendid country seat, and deeds of various descriptions.

It is stated that the Japanese Government has resolved to throw the Island of Yesso—where the Russians have for some time had a firm footing—open to all foreign nations. A wily move on the part of the Japanese to keep the Russians from entirely monopolising the place.

THE POLICE AND THE NEW SCHOOL BOARD.—Several of the Birmingham police were desirous of voting in the election for a school board, but they were peremptorily forbidden to do so by the following order, issued by the chief superintendent:—"The police are not eligible to vote for a school board; if they do they are liable to a penalty of 10*l.*"

WEATHER PROSPECTS.—The quartz miners of California are predicting a long continuance of wet weather. Swallows and martins in Lower California have reared their broods quickly last summer and departed. This phenomenon, it is asserted, is a sure sign of a wet winter. What wonderful meteorologists these little birds must be!

It is announced that the Infante Don Alfonso will marry Dona Maria das Neves, eldest daughter of Don Miguel, the late King of Portugal. A Papal dispensation will be obtained to set aside the bar of consanguinity. Dona Maria is described as a princess of distinguished person, amiable character, and very superior culture. Her husband will be her junior by about five years.

SWINDLING AT THE ANTIPODES.—A curious swindling project is reported from Australia. A deposit of gold and quartz, recently supposed to have been discovered in Victoria, Australia, created much excitement. A company was formed, and the shares were rapidly taken and paid for. Further investigation, however, showed that the mine had been veneered with gold leaf, laid on with size or varnish. The projectors of the company have been arrested.

MR. THOMAS BRASSEY, SEN., who had been a railway contractor since 1836, recently died suddenly at St. Leonards, at the age of 65. An idea of the magnitude of Mr. Brassey's operations may be gathered from the fact that in the thirteen years from 1848 to 1861 inclusive he made, either by himself or in association with others, 2,374 miles of railway, at a contract price of 27,908,224*l.* Two sons of the deceased have seats in the present House of Commons.—Mr. Thomas Brassey, for Hastings, and Mr. Henry Arthur Brassey, for Sandwich.

GREEK BRIGANDS.—A letter from Athens describes brigandage as still rampant in Greece. One of the band of Mr. Herbert's murderers, named Karavidas, has been captured by the Turks, and Mr. Cookson has gone to Thessaly to be present at his examination. The Ottoman government would have given him up to the Greek authorities, but it was considered likely to be more conducive to the cause of truth that he should be examined before he fell under the influences that can be brought to bear at Athens in matters of brigandage. An alarming case has occurred in Arcadia. Mr. Polychronopoulos, a silk merchant, was captured, and when the brigands found themselves closely pursued they cut and stabbed him in several places and left him for dead. He was found to be still living, but his life is in danger, and his sufferings are terrible.

A BAL MASQUE ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO.—"In the evening we went to Lady Townsend's, who let in masques, and a great number she had. Lady Villiers was a sultana, as fine as any eastern princess I ever read of, a most immense profusion of diamonds all over her. Miss Dutton was a fine figure in the character of Almeida; there was a most jolly party of milkmaids with the May Day garland. Sir Watkin Williams Wynne, Lady Francis Wyndham, and another, danced round the pail in true milkmaid style." Clearly this was a festive fashionable mode of celebrating the first of May. Can you

imagine London—that London namely which Theodore Hook described as bounded by Piccadilly on the north, the Haymarket on the east, Pall Mall on the south, and St. James's Street on the west—thronged with many masqueraders on a joyous night of May, trooping in every house in gay disguises, rustic, romantic, oriental? Can it really be that this was the London of a century back, and that all that innocent merriment has perished and been lost in Lethe? The "Sir Watkin" of to-day will never be seen carrying a milkpail, depend on it. Mrs. Harris had left her daughter Gertrude at home, and she also let in masques. "The first was a lady abbess, who sat and conversed with her in French half an hour before she could find out it was her old friend Lady Newdigate; soon after Sir Roger came in domino."

#### FACETIÆ.

"WAS it your eldest daughter, madam, that was bitten by a monkey?" "No, sir, it was my youngest. My eldest daughter had a worse misfortune; she married a monkey."

#### PRECOCIOSUS MEMORY.

Infant Dancer: "La! mamma, you surely are not going to dance with the gentleman. Yesterday you said he was a mere baboon."—Will-o'-the-Wisp.

#### CATHEDRAL PERQUISITES.

Voyager: "Martin, I make no demand. The authorities only allow me four shillings a year and a pair of boots. In course the giving me anything is entirely optional, but I hope as how," etc., etc.—Will-o'-the-Wisp.

#### CHRISTMAS OVER THE BORDER.

Southerner (forgetting that Christmas Day falls on Sunday this year): "Good morning, Mr. Scare-bairn. A merry Christmas."

The Rev. Mr. S.: "E-h mon! that's nae a fittin' adjective to pit afore the Sabbath!"—Punch.

#### TO THE ENGAGED.

Would you like the girl of your heart to see you while you are having your hair shampooed; or at that comical moment when the hatter, wishing to obtain the exact size of your head, is trying on the curious little machine which he keeps for that purpose?—Punch.

TURNING THE TABLES.—In the present age of enlightenment and economy billiard tables are manufactured to serve as dining tables also. If you happen to sit down as a guest at one of them, remember the good old injunction—Eat all, but pocket none.—Punch's Almanack, 1871.

ECCLESIASTICAL PROPRIETIES.—"I am," said a reverend rector of the old school to a Ritualist curate, "a martyr to the gout." "Pardon me, my dear sir," replied the latter, "happily you still survive. You should not call yourself a martyr, but a confessor."—Punch's Almanack, 1871.

#### "HE WAS A VULGAR BOY."

Mrs. Lovelid: "There, my little fellow, I've rung it for you!"

Runaway-Ringer: "Well, then, if the peeler catches yer, don't go and swear as it was me!"—Fun.

FROM WIGMORE STREET.—A Birmingham hair-cutter advertises "Private Wigs." What a horrible thought for the bald that there may be such things as Public Wigs! It is enough to make their hair (if they had any) stand on end.—Punch.

STRANGE EMPLOYMENT.—Mrs. Mahapoor is very proud of her youngest son, who has a poetical turn. One evening lately, she excused his absence from the family circle by saying that he was busy apostatising the Moon.—Punch.

THE CENSUS (ARITHMETICAL PROGRESSION). "What do you intend to be 'this' time, Maria? Last time you were Thirty-one, and Thirty the time before!"

"Tell the truth, dear—Thirty-two. Heigho! How time flies!"—Punch's Almanack, 1871.

#### THE REASON WHY.

"Goodness, gracious, Constance, what do you mean by all those knots in your scarf?"

"Well, you see, dear, my memory being so bad I usually knot my pocket-handkerchief; but this cold weather I find this sort of thing more convenient."—Will-o'-the-Wisp.

EXPERIENCE TEACHES.—A bachelor friend compares a shirt button to life, because it so often hangs by a thread.—Punch's Almanack, 1871.

PROVERBIAL FALLACY.—"Waste not, want not"—Boah. One may never waste a candle's end, and yet want a thousand a year.—Punch's Almanack, 1871.

"A BAD MEMORY."—Recently a kind and laughter-loving old lady, not blessed with much originality of thought, delighted in amusing her young friends with cake and wine, riddles and charades, not one of which, save by accident, did she ever



give correctly to her juvenile guests. One evening, with more than usual gravity—inspired, no doubt, by the illustrious name involved in her question—"Why," she asked, "is your breath of a frosty morning like the hair apparent?"—*Will-o'-the-Wisp.*

"Miss JULIA," said a gentleman to a lady in a shower, "permit me to walk by you, and to shelter you with my umbrella?" "I see," archly said the lady to her admirer, "you want to be my rain beau."

"WHAT would you like to be when you become a man?" said a fond mother to her young hopeful. "Would you like to be a merchant, or a doctor, or lawyer, or preacher?" "I think, mamma," said the urchin, "I'd rather be a candy shop."

#### FESTIVITIES OF THE SEASON.

*Mrs. Smith* (to *Mr. S.*, who has just arrived home at 2.30 a.m.): "What do you mean, sir, by coming home in such a state at this untimely hour?"

*Mr. S.* (decidedly "frosh"): "S-s-sh-tate! Timely hour! Eh! After a pause, with intense dignity—"forhinate for you, ma-ran, frien' took me Bri'h Mueheum—(sic)—an' if we hadn't come out 'fore laast at pan'omino—'shouldn' a' been home for very consi'erable—(sic)—*Punch's Almanack*, 1871.

**THE BEST BREAD.**—"I keep the best bread," said a certain baker the other day to a poor fellow who complained of the inferior quality of the article he had purchased of him the day before. "I don't doubt it," replied the customer. "Then why do you complain?" asked the baker. "Because I would suggest that you sell the best bread, and keep the bad," was the reply.

**ALL THE DIFFERENCE.**—In all policies of life insurance these, among other questions, occur: "Age of father, if living?" "Age of mother, if living?" "A man in the country who filled up an application, made his father's age 112 years, and his mother's 102. The agent, amazed at this showing, fancied that he had got an excellent subject, and remarked that the man came of a very long-lived family. "Oh, you see, sir," replied the applicant, "my parents died many years ago, but if living would be as aged as there put down." "Oh, I see," said the agent.

#### THE QUIP MODIST.

**Host** (Self-made Man): "I assure you, Brown, there isn't a man as you've been dinin' with to-day as isn't with his height or 'und'rd thousan' pound!"

**Artist** (awfully bored): "Oh, don't apologise, I beg! I don't mind 'em! Indifferent honest, I dare say, some of 'em! Seem good judges of your wine. You needn't tell 'em who I am, you know!"

Strolls into the garden.—*Punch's Almanack*, 1871.

#### WHAT O'CLOCK IS IT?

"On Saturday morning Her Majesty the Queen left Windsor Castle at a quarter past two o'clock, on a visit to Lady Clarendon."—*Times*.

What an excellent example of early rising the Queen sets her subjects! And on these dark mornings, when it requires an immense effort to be up and stirring even at eight! But as we read on we get bewildered, for we are told that Her Majesty was back at Windsor "at 1.35 p.m. precisely," and that the trip "only occupied three hours and thirty-five minutes." Calculations of time must be very different at Windsor Castle (for in Printing House Square) from what they are in Fleet Street; and it would be more satisfactory if some learned society, such as the Astronomical or the Horological, would help puzzled readers to solve this perplexing problem.—*Punch*.

**A POSER.**—A school-teacher in a town in Hampshire, seeing one morning a new pupil in her school-room, asked the "young hopeful" in accordance with the requirements of the "superintending committee" his father's name? "Hayes," answered the boy, promptly. "What is his Christian name?" said the teacher. "Hayes, I tell you!" replied the promising youth. "Well," inquired the instructor, determined to know if Mr. Hayes had any Christian name, "what does your mother call him?" "Mother? She calls him old Hayes!" responded the boy, as if his destiny depended on the reply.

#### "GO" AND "COME"

"If you want your business done," says the proverb, "go and do it; if you don't want it done, send some one else." An indolent gentleman had a freehold estate, producing about five hundred a year. Becoming involved in debt, he sold half the estate, and let the remainder to an industrious farmer for twenty years. About the end of the term the farmer called to pay his rent, and asked the owner whether he would sell his farm.

"Will you buy it?" asked the owner, surprised. "Yes, if we can agree about the price." "That is exceeding strange," observed the gentleman; "pray tell me how it happens that while I could not live upon twice as much land, for which I

paid no rent, you are regularly paying me two hundred a year for your farm, and are able in a few years to purchase it?"

"The reason is plain," was the reply; "you sat still and said go; I got up and said come. You lay in bed and enjoyed your estate; I rose in the morning and minded my business."

#### A GREAT DAY.

There have been grand doings at Windsor, at the South-Western Railway Station, in celebration of the return visit paid by the Empress Eugénie to Her Majesty at the castle. No doubt the Empress has addressed an autograph letter of thanks to the directors and officials, in acknowledgment of the extraordinary preparations they made for her reception, with a disregard of expense (and coal) which even in this country of pomp and display has rarely, if ever, been equalled. For what do we read? That the "suite of Royal waiting-rooms opposite the arrival platform were in readiness, and fires had been lit in order to insure the comfort of the visitors."

We have emphasised, by the aid of the italic letter, the words last quoted, because it may not occur to all readers that the day of the Empress's visit to Windsor was Monday the 5th of December, when a fire was considered an indispensable necessity by everybody who could afford a scuttle of coals. The next dividend of the South-Western Railway is not likely to suffer through any reckless profusion on the part of the company in receiving their Imperial visitor.—*Punch*.

#### REMEMBER BOYS MAKE MEN!

WHEN you see a ragged urchin  
Standing wistful in the street,  
With torn hat and kneeless trousers,  
Dirty face and bare red feet,  
Pass not by the child unheeding;  
Smile upon him. Mark me, when  
He's grown up he'll not forget it;  
For, remember, boys make men!

When the buoyant youthful spirits  
Overflow in boyish freak,  
Chide your child in gentle accents;  
Do not in your anger speak.

You must sow in youthful bosoms  
Seeds of tender mercy; then  
Plants will grow and bear good fruitage,  
When the erring boys are men.

Have you never seen a grand sire,  
With his eyes aglow with joy,  
Bring to mind some act of kindness—  
Something said to him, a boy?  
Or relate some slight or coldness,  
With a brow all clouded, when  
He said they were too thoughtless  
To remember boys make men?

Let us try to add some pleasure  
To the life of every boy;  
For each child needs tender interest  
In its sorrow and its joy.  
Call your boys home by its brightness;  
They avoid a gloomy den;  
Seeking elsewhere joy and comfort:  
And, remember, boys make men!

M. E. T.

#### GEMS.

A FRIEND cannot be known in prosperity, and an enemy cannot be hid in adversity.

If you wish to get along in the world, you must not stop to kick at every one who backs at you.

Don't tell unlikely or silly stories, even if you know them to be true.

ONE spiteful thing you've restrained yourself from saying does you more credit than many civil things you have said.

DIEDAID not your inferior, though poor, since he may possibly be much your superior in wisdom and the noble endowments of the mind.

It is impossible to make people understand their ignorance; for it requires knowledge to perceive it hath it not.

THE most important lesson of life is to know how to be happy within ourselves, when home is our comfort, and all in it. Do not refine away happiness by thinking that which is good may be better.

#### HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

**BUTTERMILK.**—Persons who have not been in the habit of drinking buttermilk consider it disagreeable, because it has a slightly sour taste, in consequence of the presence of lactic acid. There is not much nourishment in buttermilk, but the presence of the lactic acid assists the digestion of any food taken with it. The Welsh peasants almost live upon oat-cake and buttermilk. Invalids suffering from

indigestion will do well to drink buttermilk at meal times.

**TO POLISH MARBLE, ETC.**—Marble of any kind, alabaster, any hard stone, or glass may be repolished by rubbing it with a linen cloth dressed with oxide of tin (sold under the name of putty powder). For this purpose a couple or more folds of linen should be fastened tight over a piece of wood, flat or otherwise, according to the form of the stone. To repolish a mantelpiece it should be first perfectly cleaned. This is best done by making a paste of lime, soda, and water, well wetting the marble, and applying the paste. Then let it remain for a day or so, keeping it moist during the interval. When this paste has been removed the polishing may begin. Chips in the marble should be rubbed out first with emery and water. At every stage of polishing the linen and putty powder must be kept constantly wet. Glass, such as jewellers' show counter-cases, which has become scratched, may be polished in the same way.

#### STATISTICS.

**STAMPS.**—The annual official return published by the Inland Revenue shows that during the year ended the 31st of March, 1870, 55,564 probates of will, letters of administration, and testamentary inventories were taxed, amounting to 1,015,470l.; 5,540,073 inland and 3,040,169 foreign bills of exchange; 36,550 bankers' notes, and 146,049,040 penny receipt stamps for draughts and other documents. No account is kept of the number of stamps for marine insurances, which produced last year 88,936l. A total of 13,597 certificates were issued to attornays, 1,147 to bankers, 66 to conveyances, and 12,143 licences to drivers of metropolitan public carriages, as well as 8,333 marriage certificates. Patent medicines produced 72,353l. in way of duty; legacies and successions, 2,970,769l.; fire insurances, 465,010l.; and playing cards, 12,303l., the sum collected on 984,210 packs. A duty of 17s. per ounce for gold and 1s. 6d. for silver plate is charged for all manufactured in Great Britain and Ireland, and the sum derived from this source amounted to 66,039l. The stamps for divorces and matrimonial causes were 16,304 in number, and produced 3,214l.; for Admiralty Court fees, 22,565, producing 8,907l.; 108,910 for patents for inventions, producing 121,329l. The companies' registration fees produced 9,496l.; the record of title fees, 337l.; land registry fees, 1,353l.; common law court fees, 91,433l.; public record fees, 720l.; Copyhold Enclosure and Title Commission, 9,011l.; Bankruptcy Court, 64,022l.; Law Fund (Ireland), 9,549l.; Chancery Fund (Ireland), 4,519l.; Judgments Registry Fund (Ireland), 3,824l.; Civil Bill Fund (Ireland), 13,678l.; Registration of Deeds (Ireland), 11,355l. The aggregate amount of revenue of the Inland Revenue Department collected in stamps amounted to 9,532,878l., as compared with 9,565,233l. in the preceding year, thus representing an increase, because, though the stamp duty on fire insurance was repealed on and after the 25th of June, 1869, the Bankruptcy Court and Chancery Court fee stamps in England became revenue on and after the 1st of October of last year.

#### MISCELLANEOUS.

THERE will be fifty-three Sundays in the year 1871—the year beginning and ending on a Sunday. It ought to be a good year and a happy one.

A CINCINNATI court has decided that a wife has a vested right in her husband, and that any one who may entice him away from her is liable in damages.

The convicts in the Oregon state prison are to be employed this winter in erecting a still stronger guard-house for themselves.

SOME little time ago the Crown Prince of Prussia conferred the Iron Cross of the Second Class on Colonel Walker, and he has received Her Majesty's gracious permission to wear it.

The election of the Duke d'Aosta as King of Spain has caused great rejoicings in Havana. The city has been given up to festivities, and there have been numerous salutes of cannon.

FLORIDA promises to become hereafter a large producer of cane sugar. The crop this year is a good one, and is said to be more profitable than cotton.

A young nobleman proposes at his own expense to give a dinner to all the poor of London on the receipt of the news of the first really great French victory. Our allies have something to fight for quite novel—namely, for charity's sake.

The city authorities have notified their intention to apply for the necessary powers to acquire land, etc., for the enlargement of Billingsgate and Londen-hall Markets, and to enable them to alter the tolls, rules, and regulations governing those important marts.

# Love is there.

Poetry by BAYLE BERNARD, ESQ.

BALLAD.

Music by ROBERT GUYLOTT.

With expression.

VOICE. *Slow with expression.* *lento.*

Tho' her bo - som seems calm as the  
Flow her ac - cents still en - sy and

PIANO. *p* *f* *dim.* *pp* *Corn* *lento*

*lento.*

rest, That lights on the lull'd in-fant's lid, And as pure, yet her eye has con-fessed The e - motion within it that's  
free, Like me - lo - dy sweet - ly in tune, Yet the hue of her cheek tells to me, It will lose all its har-mo - ny

*Flutes dolce.* *fz*

*espres e lento.* *dolce e lento.* *tempo e dolce*

hid;..... If thou hearest no sighs, Then - look in her eyes, Love is there! Love is there! Love is there! Like the wave that is alumb'ring that  
soon;..... If her eyes do not speak, Prithee look on her cheek, Love is there! Love is there! Love is there! And the chords of that bo-som shall

*colla voce.* *lento e poco cres.* *fp* *p*

*espres e lento.* *ad lib.*

bo - som shall heave, As her Lov - er may wake it, to glad - den or grieve; Like the wave that is alumb'ring that bo - som shall heave, As her  
thrill but a - gain, As her Lov - er may touch them, in plea - sure or pain; And the chords of that bo - som shall thrill but a - gain, As her

*pp* *cres.*

*con anima.*

Lov - er may wake it, to glad - den or grieve.  
Lov - er may touch them, in plea - sure or pain.

*colla voce.* *f* *fz*

Flow her accents still easy and free,  
Like melody sweetly in tune,  
Yet the hue of her cheek tells to me,  
'Twill lose all its harmony soon.

If her eyes do not speak,  
Prithee look on her cheek,  
Love is there!  
And the chords of that bosom shall thrill but again,  
As her Lover may touch them, in pleasure or pain.

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